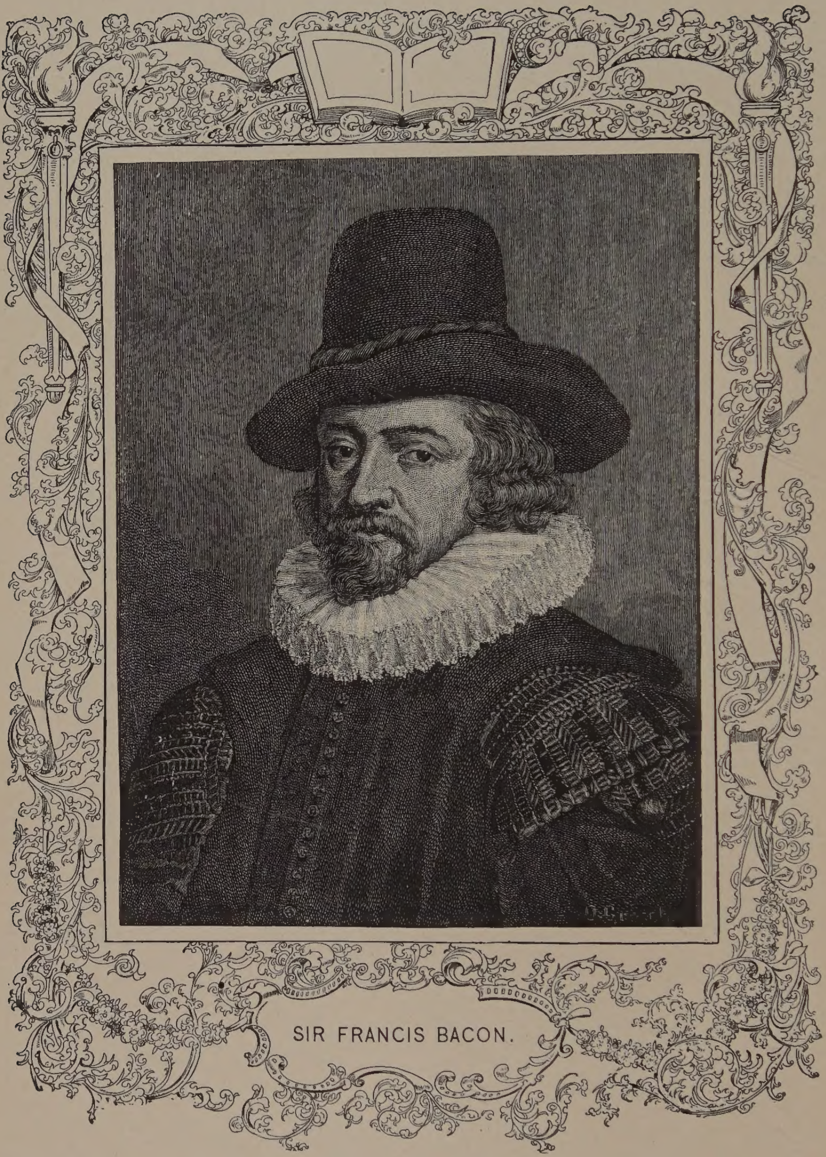

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THOMAS AQUINAS

(1226–1274)

BY EDWIN A. PACE

Thomas Aquinas, philosopher and theologian, was born in 1226, at or near Aquino, in Southern Italy. He received his early training from the Benedictines of Monte Cassino. Tradition says he was a taciturn and seemingly dull boy, derisively nicknamed by his fellows «the dumb ox,» but admired by his teachers. He subsequently entered the University of Naples. While studying there he joined the Dominican Order, and was sent later on to Cologne, where he became a pupil of Albertus Magnus. In 1251 he went to Paris, took his degrees in theology, and began his career as a teacher in the University. His academic work there was continued, with slight interruptions, till 1261. The eleven years which followed were spent partly in Rome, where Thomas enjoyed the esteem of Urban IV. and Clement IV., and partly in the cities of Northern Italy, which he visited in the interest of his Order. During this period he produced the greatest of his works, and won such repute as a theologian that the leading universities made every effort to secure him as a teacher. He was appointed to a professorship at Naples, where he remained from 1272 until the early part of 1274. Summoned by Gregory X. to take part in the Council of Lyons, he set out on his journey northward, but was compelled by illness to stop at Fossa Nuova. Here he died March 7th, 1274. He was canonized in 1323, and was proclaimed a doctor of the Church by Pius V. in 1567.

Thomas Aquinas

These honors were merited by a remarkable combination of ability and virtue. To an absolute purity of life, St. Thomas added an earnest love of truth and of labor. Calm in the midst of discussion, he was equally proof against the danger of brilliant success. As the friend of popes and princes, he might have attained the highest dignities; but these he steadfastly declined, devoting himself, so far as his duty permitted, to scientific pursuits. Judged by his writings, he was intense yet thoroughly objective, firm in his own position but dispassionate in treating the opinions of others. Conclusions reached by daring speculation and faultless logic are stated simply, impersonally. Keen replies are given without bitterness, and the boldest efforts of reason are united with the submissiveness of faith.

His works fill twenty-five large quarto volumes of the Parma edition. This is, so far, the most complete collection, though various portions have been edited from time to time with the commentaries of learned theologians like Cajetan and Sylvius. Partial translations have also been made into several modern languages; but as yet there is no complete English edition of St. Thomas.

Turning to the Latin text, the student cannot but notice the contrast between the easy diction of modern philosophical writers and the rugged conciseness of the mediæval Schoolman. On the other hand, disappointment awaits those who quit the pages of Cicero for the less elegant Latinity of the Middle Ages. What can be said in favor of scholastic «style» is that it expresses clearly and tersely the subtle shades of thought which had developed through thirteen centuries, and which often necessitated a sacrifice of classic form. With the Schoolmen, as with modern writers on scientific subjects, precision was the first requisite, and terminology was of more consequence than literary beauty.

Similar standards must be kept in view when we pass judgment upon the technique of St. Thomas. In his presentation we find neither the eloquence nor the rhetoric of the Fathers. He quotes them continually, and in some of his works adopts their division into books and chapters. But his exposition is more compact, consisting at times of clear-cut arguments in series without an attempt at transition, at other times of sustained reasoning processes in which no phrase is superfluous and no word ambiguous. Elsewhere he uses the more rigid mold which was peculiar to the Scholastic Period, and had been fashioned chiefly by Alexander Hales. Each subject is divided into so many «questions,» and each question into so many «articles.» The «article» begins with the statement of objections, then discusses various opinions, establishes the author's position, and closes with a solution of the difficulties which that position may encounter. This method had its advantages. It facilitated analysis, and obliged the writer to examine every aspect of a problem. It secured breadth of view and thoroughness of treatment.. It was, especially, a transparent medium for reason, unbiased by either sentiment or verbiage.

If such qualities of style and presentation were encouraged by the environment in which Aquinas pursued his earlier studies, they were also helpful in the task which he chose as his life-work. This was the construction of a system in which all the elements of knowledge should be harmoniously united. An undertaking so vast necessitated a long preparation, the study of all available sources, and the elucidation of many detailed problems. Hence, a considerable portion of St. Thomas's works is taken up with the explanation of Peter Lombard's ‘Sententiæ,’ with Commentaries on Aristotle, with Expositions of Sacred Scripture, collections from the Fathers, and various *opuscula* or studies on special subjects. Under the title ‘Quæstiones Disputatæ,’ numerous problems in philosophy and theology are discussed at length. But the synthetic power of Aquinas is shown chiefly in the ‘Contra Gentes’ and the ‘Summa Theologica,’ the former being a defense of Christian belief with special reference to Arabian philosophy, and the latter a masterly compendium of rational and revealed truth.

The conception of the ‘Summa’ was not altogether original. From the earliest days of the Church, men of genius had insisted on the reasonableness of Christian belief by showing that, though supernatural in its origin, it did not conflict with either the facts or the laws of human knowledge. And as these had found their highest expression in Greek philosophy, it was natural that this philosophy should serve as a basis for the elucidation of revealed truth. The early Fathers turned to Plato, not only because his teaching was so spiritual, but also because it could be so readily used as a framework for those theological concepts which Christianity had brought into the world. Thus adopted by men who were recognized authorities in the Church,—especially men like Augustine and the Areopagite,—Platonism endured for centuries as the rational element in dogmatic exposition.

Scholasticism inaugurated a new era. Patristic erudition had gathered a wealth of theological knowledge which the Schoolmen fully appreciated. But the same truths were to receive another setting and be treated by different methods. Speculation changed its direction, Aristotle taking the place of his master. The peripatetic system found able exponents in the earlier Scholastics; but Aquinas surpassed them alike in the mastery of the philosopher's principles and in his application of these principles to Christian doctrine. His Commentaries on Aristotle adhere strictly to the text, dissecting its meaning and throwing into relief the orderly sequence of ideas. In his other works, he develops the germs of thought which he had gathered from the Stagirite, and makes them the groundwork of his philosophical and theological speculations.

With the subtlety of a metaphysician St. Thomas combined a vast erudition. Quotations from the Fathers appear on nearly every page of his writings, serving either as a keynote to the discussion which follows, or as an occasion for solving objections. Toward St. Augustine he shows the deepest reverence, though their methods differ so widely, and his brief but lucid comments throw light on difficult sayings of the great Doctor. His familiarity with patristic theology is shown particularly in the 'Catena Aurea,' where he links with passages from the Sacred Text numerous extracts from the older commentators.

His respect for these interpretations did not prevent him from making a thorough search of Scripture itself. With characteristic clearness and depth he interpreted various books of the Bible, insisting chiefly on the doctrinal meaning. The best of his work in this line was devoted to the Pauline Epistles and to the Book of Job; but his mastery of each text is no less evident where he takes the authority of Scripture as the starting-point in theological argument, or makes it the crowning evidence at the close of a philosophical demonstration.

The materials gathered from Philosophy, Tradition, and Scripture were the fruit of analysis; the final synthesis had yet to be accomplished. This was the scope of the 'Summa Theologica,' a work which, though it was not completed, is the greatest production of Thomas Aquinas. In the prologue he says:—

> «Since the teacher of Catholic truth should instruct not only those who are advanced, but also those who are beginning, it is our purpose in this work to treat subjects pertaining to the Christian religion in a manner adapted to the instruction of beginners. For we have considered that young students encounter various obstacles in the writings of different authors: partly because of the multiplication of useless questions, articles, and arguments; partly because the essentials of knowledge are dealt with, not in scientific order, but according as the explanation of books required or an occasion for disputing offered; partly because the frequent repetition of the same things begets weariness and confusion in the hearer's mind. Endeavoring, therefore, to avoid these defects and others of a like nature, we shall try, with confidence in the Divine assistance, to treat of sacred science briefly and clearly, so far as the subject-matter will allow.»

The work intended for novices in theology, and so unpretentiously opened, is then portioned out in these words:—

> «Whereas, the chief aim of this science is to impart a knowledge of God, not only as existing in Himself, but also as the origin and end of all things, and especially of rational creatures, we therefore shall treat first of God; second, of the rational creature's tendency toward God; third, of Christ, who as man is the way whereby we approach unto God. Concerning God, we shall consider (1) those things which pertain to the Divine Essence; (2) those which regard the distinction of persons; (3) those which concern the origin of creatures from Him. As to the Divine Essence we shall inquire (1) whether God exists; (2) what is, or rather what is not, the manner of His existence; (3) how He acts through His knowledge, will, and power. Under the first

heading we shall ask whether God's existence is self-evident, whether it can be demonstrated, and whether God does exist.»

Similar subdivisions precede each question as it comes up for discussion, so that the student is enabled to take a comprehensive view, and perceive the bearing of one problem on another as well as its place in the wide domain of theology. As a consequence, those who are familiar with the 'Summa' find in it an object-lesson of breadth, proportion, and orderly thinking. Its chief merit, however, lies in the fact that it is the most complete and systematic exhibition of the harmony between reason and faith. In it, more than in any other of his works, is displayed the mind of its author. It determines his place in the history of thought, and closes what may be called the second period in the development of Christian theology. Scholasticism, the high point of intellectual activity in the Church, reached its culmination in Thomas Aquinas.

His works have been a rich source of information for Catholic theologians, and his opinions have always commanded respect. The polemics of the sixteenth century brought about a change in theological methods, the positive and critical elements becoming more prominent. Modern rationalism, however, has intensified the discussion of those fundamental problems which St. Thomas handled so thoroughly. As his writings furnish both a forcible statement of the Catholic position and satisfactory replies to many current objections, the Thomistic system has recently been restored. The «neo-scholastic movement» was initiated by Leo XIII. in his Encyclical 'Æterni Patris,' dated August 4th, 1879, and its rapid growth has made Aquinas the model of Catholic thought in the nineteenth century, as he certainly was in the thirteenth.

The subjoined extracts show his views on some questions of actual importance, with regard not alone to mediæval controversies, but to the problems of the universe, which will press on the minds of men twenty-five hundred years in the future as they did twenty-five hundred years in the past.

Edw. A. Pace

ON THE VALUE OF OUR CONCEPTS OF THE DEITY

Part I — From the ‹Summa Theologica›

It is obvious that terms implying negation or extrinsic relation in no way signify the divine substance, but simply the removal of some attribute from Him, or His relation with other beings, or rather the relation of other beings with Him. As to appellations that are absolute and positive,— such as *good*, *wise*, and the like,— various opinions have been entertained. It was held by some that these terms, though used affirmatively, were in reality devised for the purpose of elimination, and not with the intent of positive attribution. Hence, they claimed, when we say that God is a living being, we mean that God's existence is not that of inanimate things; and so on for other predicates. This was the position of Rabbi Moses. According to another view these terms are employed to denote a relation between God and creatures; so that for instance, when we say, God is good, we mean, God is the cause of goodness in all things.

Both interpretations, however, are open to a threefold objection. For, in the first place, neither can offer any explanation of the fact that certain terms are applied to the Deity in preference to others. As He is the source of all good, so He is the cause of all things corporeal; consequently, if by affirming that God is good we merely imply that He is the cause of goodness, we might with equal reason assert that He is a corporeal being. . . .

Again, the inference from these positions would be that all terms applied to God have only a secondary import, such, for instance, as we give to the word *healthy*, as applied to medicine; whereby we signify that it is productive of health in the organism, while the organism itself is said, properly and primarily, to be healthy.

In the third place, these interpretations distort the meaning of those who employ such terms in regard to the Deity. For, when they declare that He is the living God, they certainly mean something else than that He is the cause of our life or that He is different from inanimate bodies.

We are obliged, therefore, to take another view, and to affirm that such terms denote the substantial nature of God, but that, at the same time, their representative force is deficient. They express the knowledge which our intellect has of God; and since this knowledge is gotten from created things, we know Him according to the measure in which creatures represent Him. Now God, absolutely and in all respects perfect, possesses every perfection that is found in His creatures. Each created thing, therefore, inasmuch as it has some perfection, resembles and manifests the Deity; not as a being of the same species or genus with itself, but as a supereminent source from which are derived its effects. They represent Him, in a word, just as the energy of the terrestrial elements represents the energy of the sun.

Our manner of speech, therefore, denotes the substance of God, yet denotes it imperfectly, because creatures are imperfect manifestations of Him. When we say that God is good, we do not mean that He is the cause of goodness or that He is not evil. Our meaning is this: What we call goodness in creatures preexists in God in a far higher way. Whence it follows, not that God is good because He is the source of good, but rather, because He is good, He imparts goodness to all things else; as St. Augustine says, «Inasmuch as He is good, *we are.*»

HOW CAN THE ABSOLUTE BE A CAUSE?

From the ‹Quæstiones Disputatæ›

The relations which are spoken of as existing between God and creatures are not really in Him. A real relation is that which exists between two things. It is mutual or bilateral then, only when its basis in both correlates is the same. Such is the case in all quantitive relations. Quantity being essentially the same in all quanta, gives rise to relations which are real in both terms—in the part, for instance, and in the whole, in the unit of measurement and in that which is measured.

But where a relation originates in causation, as between that which is active and that which is passive, it does not always concern both terms. True, that which is acted upon, or set in motion, or produced, must be related to the source of these modifications, since every effect is dependent upon its cause. And it is equally true that such causes or agencies are in some cases related to their effects, namely, when the production of those effects redounds in some way to the well-being of the cause itself. This is evidently what happens when like begets like, and thereby perpetuates, so far as may be, its own species. . . . There are cases, nevertheless, in which a thing, without being related, has other things related to it. The cognizing subject is related to that which is the object of cognition — to a thing which is outside the mind. But the thing itself is in no way affected by this cognition, since the mental process is confined to the mind, and therefore does not bring about any change in the object. Hence the relation established by the act of knowing cannot be in that which is known.

The same holds good of sensation. For though the physical object sets up changes in the sense-organ, and is related to it as other physical agencies are related to the things on which they act, still, the sensation implies, over and above the organic change, a subjective activity of which the external activity is altogether devoid. Likewise, we say that a man is at the right of a pillar because, with his power of locomotion, he can take his stand at the right or the left, before or behind, above or below. But obviously these relations, vary them as we will, imply nothing in the stationary pillar, though they are real in the man who holds or changes his position. Once more, a coin has nothing to do with the action that gives it its value, since this action is a human convention; and a man is quite apart from the process which produces his image. Between a man and his portrait there is a relation, but this is real in the portrait only. Between the coin and its current value there is a relation, but this is not real in the coin.

Now for the application. God's action is not to be understood as going out from Him and terminating in that which He creates. His action is Himself; consequently altogether apart from the genus of created being whereby the creature is related to Him. And again, he gains nothing by creating, or, as Avicenna puts it, His creative action is in the highest degree generous. It is also manifest that His action involves no modification of His being — without changing, He causes the changeable. Consequently, though creatures are related to Him, as effects to their cause, He is not really related to them.

ON THE PRODUCTION OF LIVING THINGS

From the ‹Quæstiones Disputatæ›

According to Augustine, the passage «Let the earth bring forth the green herb» means, not that plants were then actually produced in their proper nature, but that a germinative power was given the earth to produce plants by the work of propagation; so that the earth is then said to have brought forth the green herb and the fruit-yielding tree, inasmuch as it received the power of producing them. This position is strengthened by the authority of Scripture (Gen. ii. 4):—«These are the generations of the heaven and the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the heaven and the earth, and every plant in the field before it sprang up in the earth, and every herb in the ground before it grew.» From this text we infer, first, that all the works of the six days were created in the day that God made heaven and earth and every plant of the field; and consequently that all plants, which are said to have been created on the third day, were produced at the same time that God created heaven and earth. The second inference is that plants were then produced not actually, but only according to causal virtues, in that the power to produce them was given to the earth. And this is meant when it is said that He produced every plant of the field before it actually arose upon the earth by His dispositive action, and every herb of the earth before it actually grew. Hence, before they came forth in reality, they were made causally in the earth.

This view, moreover, is supported by reason. For in those first days God made the creature either in its cause, or in its origin, or in its actuality, by the work from which He afterward rested; He nevertheless works even till now in the administration of things created by the work of propagation. To this latter process belongs the actual production of plants from the earth, because all that is needed to bring them forth is the energy of the heavenly bodies as their father, so to say, and the power of the earth in place of a mother. Plants, therefore, were produced on the third day, not actually, but causally. After the six days, however, they were actually brought forth, according to their proper species and in their proper nature, by the work of administration.

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

BY RICHARD GOTTHEIL

The Arabian Nights—or, more accurately, 'The Thousand Nights and a Night' (Alf Leílah wa-leílah)—have gained a popularity in Europe, since they were first turned into a modern language by Galland in 1704, which rivals, if it does not exceed, their regard in the East. They opened up to Europe a wealth of anecdote, a fertility of daring fancy, which has not ceased to amuse and to interest. It is not their value as literature which has placed them so high in the popular esteem, both in the East and in the West; for they are written in a style not a little slovenly, the same scenes, figures, and expressions are repeated to monotony, and the poetical extracts which are interwoven are often of very uncertain excellence. Some of the modern translations—as by Payne and Burton—have improved upon the original, and have often given it a literary flavor which it certainly has not in the Arabic. For this reason, native historians and writers seldom range the stories in their literary chronicles, or even deign to mention them by name. The 'Nights' have become popular from the very fact that they affect little; that they are *contes* pure and simple, picturing the men and the manners of a certain time without any attempt to gloss over their faults or to excuse their foibles: so that «the doings of the ancients become a lesson to those that follow after, that men look upon the admonitory events that have happened to others and take warning.» All classes of men are to be found there: Harun al-Rashid and his viziers, as well as the baker, the cobbler, the merchant, the courtesan. The very coarseness is a part of the picture; though it strikes us more forcibly than it did those to whom the tales were told and for whom they were written down. It is a kaleidoscope of the errors and failings and virtues of the men whose daily life it records; it is also a picture of the wonderfully rich fantasy of the Oriental mind.

In the better texts (*i e.*, of Boulak and Calcutta) there are no less than about two hundred and fifty stories; some long, others short. There is no direct order in which they follow one upon the other. The chief story may at any moment suggest a subordinate one; and as the work proceeds, the looseness and disconnectedness of the parts increase. The whole is held together by a «frame»; a device which has passed into the epic of Ariosto ('Orlando Furioso,' xxviii.), and which is not unlike that used by Boccaccio ('Decameron') and

Chaucer (‘Canterbury Tales’). This «frame» is, in short:—A certain king of India, Shahriyar, aroused by his wife's infidelity, determines to make an end of all the women in his kingdom. As often as he takes a wife, on the morrow he orders her slain. Shahrzad, the daughter of his Vizier, takes upon herself the task of ridding the king of his evil intent. On the night of her marriage to the king, she, together with her sister Dunyazad, so engrosses his mind with her stories that the king seeks their continuance night after night; thus she wards off her fate for nearly three years. At the end of that time she has borne the king three male children; and has, by the sprightliness of her mind, gradually drawn all the conceit out of him, so that his land is at rest. The tales told within this frame may be divided into: (*a*) Histories, or long romances, which are often founded upon historical facts; (*b*) Anecdotes and short stories, which deal largely with the caliphs of the house of Abbas; (*c*) Romantic fiction, which, though freely mingled with supernatural intervention, may also be purely fictitious (*contes fantastiques*); (*d*) Fables and Apologues; (*e*) Tales, which serve the teller as the peg upon which to hang and to exhibit his varied learning. In addition to this «frame,» there is a thread running through the whole; for the grand theme which is played with so many variations is the picturing of love—in the palace and in the hovel, in the city and in the desert. The scenes are laid in all the four corners of the globe, but especially in the two great centres of Muhammadan activity, Bagdad and Cairo. It is not a matter of chance that Harun al-Rashid is the Caliph to whom the legends of the ‘Nights’ have given a crown so very different from the one which he really wore. Though his character was often far from that which is pictured here, he was still a patron of art and of literature. His time was the heyday of Muhammadan splendor; and his city was the metropolis to which the merchants and the scholars flocked from the length and breadth of Arab dominion.

To unravel the literary history of such a collection is difficult indeed, for it has drawn upon all civilizations and all literatures. But since Hammer-Purgstall and De Sacy began to unwind the skein, many additional turns have been given. The idea of the «frame» in general comes undoubtedly from India; and such stories as ‘The Barber's Fifth Brother,’ ‘The Prince and the Afrit's Mistress,’ have been «traced back to the Hitopadesa, Panchatantra, and Katha Sarit Sagara.» The ‘Story of the King, his Seven Viziers, his Son, and his Favorite,’ is but a late version, through the Pahlavi, of the Indian Sindibad Romance of the time of Alexander the Great. A number of fables are easily paralleled by those in the famous collection of Bidpai (see the list in Jacobs's ‘The Fables of Bidpai,’ London, 1888, lxviii.). This is probably true of the whole little collection of beast fables in the One Hundred and Forty-sixth Night; for such fables are based upon the different reincarnations of the Buddha and the doctrine of metempsychosis. The story of Jali'ad and the Vizier Shammas is distinctly reported to have been translated from the Persian into Arabic. Even Greek sources have not been left untouched, if the picture of the cannibal in the adventures of Sindbad the Sailor be really a reflex of the story of Odysseus and Polyphemus. Arabic historians — such as Tabari, Masudi, Kazwini, al-Jaúzi — and the Kitab al-Aghani, have furnished innumerable anecdotes and tales; while such old Arabic poets as Imr al-Kais, 'Alkamah, Nabhighah, etc., have contributed occasional verses.

It is manifest that such a mass of tales and stories was not composed at any one time, or in any one place. Many must have floated around in drinking-rooms and in houses of revelry for a long time before they were put into one collection. Even to this day the story of Ali Baba is current among the Bedouins in Sinai. Whenever the digest was first made, it is certain that stories were added at a later time. This is evident from the divergences seen in the different manuscripts, and by the additional stories collected by Payne and Burton. But in their present form, everything points to the final redaction of the 'Nights' in Egypt. Of all the cities mentioned, Cairo is described the most minutely; the manners and customs of the *personæ* are those of Egyptian society — say from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. For this we have the warrant of Mr. Lane, than whom no one is to be heard upon this subject with greater respect. That such stories as these were popular in Egypt seems to follow from the fact that the only mention of them is found in Makrisi's 'Description of Cairo' (1400) and in Abu al-Mahasin, another historian of Egypt (1470). The collection cannot have been made later than 1548, the date placed by a reader on the manuscript used by Galland. But that its date is not much earlier is shown by various chance references. The mention of coffee (discovered in the fourteenth century); of cannon (first mentioned in Egypt in 1383); of the wearing of different-colored garments by Muslims, Jews, and Christians (instituted in 1301 by Muhammad ibn Kelaün); of the order of Carandaliyyah (which did not exist until the thirteenth century); of Sultani peaches (the city Sultaniyyah was founded in the middle of the thirteenth century) — point to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as the approximate date of the final composition of the 'Nights.' This is supported by the mention of the office of the Sheikh al-Islam, an office not created before the year 1453. Additions, such as the 'Story of Abu Ker and Abu Zer,' were made as late as the sixteenth century; and tobacco, which is mentioned, was not introduced into Europe until the year 1560. The thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries are a period of the revival of letters in Egypt, which might well have induced some Arab lover of folk-lore to write down a complete copy of these tales. The Emperor Salah-al-din (1169) is the last historical personage mentioned, and there is absolutely no trace of Shíite heresy to be found in the whole collection. This omission would be impossible had they been gathered up at the time of the heretical Fatimide dynasty (900–1171).

But it seems equally certain that the 'Nights' did not originate altogether in the land of the Nile. The figure of Harun al-Rashid, the many doings in the «City of Peace» (Bagdad), lead us irresistibly over to the Eastern capital of the Muhammadan Empire. The genii and Afrits and much of the gorgeous picturing remind one of Persia, or at least of Persian influence. The Arabs were largely indebted to Persia for literature of a kind like this; and we know that during the ninth and tenth centuries many books were translated from the Pahlavi and Syriac. Thus Ibn al-Mukaffah (760) gave the Arabs the 'Kholanamah,' the 'Amirnamah' (Mirror of Princes), 'Kalilah,' and 'Dimnan,' etc. The historian Masudi (943) expressly refers the story of the 'Thousand and One Nights' to a Persian original. «The first who composed such tales and made use of them were the ancient Persians. The Arabs translated them, and made others like them.» He then continues ('Prairies d'Or,' ed. De Meynard) and mentions the book 'Hezar Afsane,' which means «a thousand tales,» a book popularly called the 'Thousand and One Nights,' and containing the story of the king and his vizier, and of his daughter Shirazaad and her slave-girl Dinazad. Other books of the same kind are the book of Simas, containing stories of Indian kings and viziers, the book of Sindibad, etc. (See also 'Hanzæ Ispahanensis Annalium,' ed. Gottwaldt, 1844, page 41.) A similar statement is made by Abu Yákub al-Nadim (987) in the 'Fihrist' (ed. Flügel, page 304):—«This book, 'Hezar Afsane,' is said to have been written by the Princess Homai (or Homain), daughter of Bahman. It comprises a Thousand Nights, but less than two hundred stories; for a night story often was related in a number of nights. I have seen it many times complete; but it is in truth a meagre and uninteresting publication.» A translation of the 'Hezar Afsane' was made into Arabic, and it is again mentioned in the middle of the twelfth century by Abdulhec al-Házraji; but neither it nor the original Pahlavi has yet been found. It thus remains a matter of speculation as to how much of the 'Hezar Afsane' has found its way into the 'Nights.' It is evident that to it they are indebted for the whole general idea, for many of the principal names, and probably for the groundwork of a great many of the stories. The change of the title from 'The Thousand' to 'The Thousand and One' is due to the fact that the Arabs often expressed «a large number» by this second cipher. But the ‹Nights› cannot be a translation from the Persian; for the other two books mentioned by Masudi are in the Arabic collection. Lane supposes the relationship to be that of the ‹Æneid› to the ‹Odyssey.› But it is probably closer: one fifth of the collection which, according to Payne, is common to all manuscripts, will doubtless be found to be based on the Pahlavi original. That the dependence is not greater is evident from the absence of the great heroes of the Persian Epos — Feridun, Zer, Isfandyar, etc. The heroes are all Arabs; the life depicted is wholly Arabic.

The original Persian ‹Nights› must be quite old. Homai, the Persian Semiramis, is mentioned in the ‹Avesta›; and in Firdausi she is the daughter and the wife of Artaxerxes Longimanus (B. C. 465–425). Her mother was a Jewess, Shahrazaad, one of the captives brought from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; she afterward delivered her nation from captivity. Tabari calls Esther, of Old Testament fame, the mother of Bahman; and Professor de Goeje (de Gids, 1886, iii. 385) has cleverly identified the Homai of the old ‹Nights,› not only with Shahrazaad of the Arabian, but also with Esther of the Bible. That his argument holds good is seen from its acceptance by Kuenen (‹Hist. Krit. Einleitung,› 1, 2, page 222), August Müller (Deutsche Rundschau, 1887), and Darmesteter (‹Actes du Huitième Congrès des Orientalistes,› 1893, ii. 196).

The best translations of the ‹Nights› have been made by Antoine Galland in French (12 vols., Paris, 1704–1712); by G. Weil in German (4 vols., 1838–1842); and in English by E. W. Lane (3 vols., 1839–1841), John Payne (13 vols., 1882–1884), and Richard Burton (16 vols., 1885–1888). Lane's and Burton's translations are enriched by copious notes of great value.

Richard Gottheil

FROM ‹THE STORY OF THE CITY OF BRASS›

Part of Nights 566 and 578: Translation of E. W. Lane

There was in olden time, and in an ancient age and period, in Damascus of Syria, a King, one of the Khaleefehs, named Abd-El-Melik, the son of Marwán; and he was sitting, one day, having with him the great men of his empire, consisting of Kings and Sultans, when a discussion took place among them respecting the traditions of former nations. They called to mind the stories of our lord Suleymán the son of Daood (on both of whom be peace!) and the dominion and authority which God (whose name be exalted!) had bestowed upon him, over mankind and the Jinn and the birds and the wild beasts and other things; and they said, We have heard from those who were before us, that God (whose perfection be extolled, and whose name be exalted!) bestowed not upon any one the like of that which He bestowed upon our lord Suleymán, and that he attained to that to which none other attained, so that he used to imprison the Jinn and the Márids and the Devils in bottles of brass, and pour molten lead over them, and seal this cover over them with his signet. . . .

And the Prince of the Faithful, Abd-El-Melik, the son of Marwán, wondered at these words, and said, Extolled be the perfection of God! Suleymán was endowed with a mighty dominion! — And among those who were present in that assembly was En-Fábighah Edh-Dhubyánee; and he said, Tálib hath spoken truth in that which he hath related, and the proof of his veracity is the saying of the Wise, the First [thus versified]: —

And [consider] Suleymán, when the Deity said to him, Perform
the office of Khaleefeh, and govern with diligence;
And whoso obeyeth thee, honor him for doing so; and whoso
disobeyeth thee, imprison him forever.

He used to put them into bottles of brass, and to cast them into the sea.

And the Prince of the Faithful approved of these words, and said, By Allah, I desire to see some of these bottles! So Tálib the son of Sahl replied, O Prince of the Faithful, thou art able to do so and yet remain in thy country. Send to thy brother Abd-El-Azeez, the son of Marwán, desiring him to bring them to thee from the Western Country, that he may write orders to Moosà to journey from the Western Country, to this mountain which we have mentioned, and to bring thee what thou desirest of these bottles; for the furthest tract of his province is adjacent to this mountain. — And the Prince of the Faithful approved of his advice, and said, O Tálib, thou has spoken truth in that which thou hast said, and I desire that thou be my messenger to Moosà the son of Nuseyr for this purpose, and thou shalt have a white ensign, together with what thou shalt desire of wealth or dignity or other things, and I will be thy substitute to take care of thy family. To this Tálib replied, Most willingly, O Prince of the Faithful. And the Khaleefeh said to him, Go, in dependence on the blessing of God, and his aid. . . .

So Tálib went forth on his way to Egypt. . . . and to Upper Egypt, until they came to the Emeer Moosà, the son of Nuseyr; and when he knew of his approach he went forth to him and met him, and rejoiced at his arrival; and Tálib handed to him the letter. So he took it and read it, and understood its meaning; and he put it upon his head, saying, I hear and obey the command of the Prince of the Faithful. He determined to summon his great men; and they presented themselves; and he inquired of them respecting that which had been made known to him by the letter; whereupon they said, O Emeer, if thou desire him who will guide thee to that place, have recourse to the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, the son of Abd-El-Kuddoos Es-Samoodee; for he is a knowing man, and hath traveled much, and he is acquainted with the deserts and wastes and the seas, and their inhabitants and their wonders, and the countries of their districts. Have recourse, therefore, to him, and he will direct thee to the object of thy desire.—Accordingly he gave orders to bring him, and he came before him; and lo, he was a very old man, whom the vicissitudes of years and times had rendered decrepit. The Emeer Moosà saluted him, and said to him, O sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, our lord the Prince of the Faithful, Abd-El-Melik the son of Marwán, hath commanded us thus and thus, and I possess little knowledge of that land, and it hath been told me that thou art acquainted with that country and the routes. Hast thou then a wish to accomplish the affair of the Prince of the Faithful?—The sheykh replied, Know, O Emeer, that this route is difficult, far extending, with few tracks. The Emeer said to him, How long a period doth it require? He answered, It is a journey of two years and some months going, and the like returning; and on the way are difficulties and horrors, and extraordinary and wonderful things. Moreover, thou art a warrior for the defense of the faith, and our country is near unto the enemy; so perhaps the Christians may come forth during our absence; it is expedient, therefore, that thou leave in thy province one to govern it.—He replied, Well. And he left his son Hároon as his substitute in his province, exacted an oath of fidelity to him, and commanded the troops that they should not oppose him, but obey him in all that he should order them to do. And they heard his words, and obeyed him. His son Hároon was of great courage, an illustrious hero, and a bold champion; and the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad pretended to him that the place in which were the things that the Prince of the Faithful desired was four months' journey distant, on the shore of the sea, and that throughout the whole route were halting-places, adjacent one to another, and grass and springs. And he said, God will assuredly make this affair easy to us through the blessing attendant upon thee, O Viceroy of the Prince of the Faithful. Then the Emeer Moosà said, Knowest thou if any one of the Kings have trodden this land before us? He answered him, Yes, O Emeer: this land belonged to the King of Alexandria, Darius the Greek.

[The cavalcade fare on, and soon reach a first «extraordinary and wonderful thing,» — the palace-tomb of great «Koosh, the son of Sheddad,» full of impressive mortuary inscriptions that set the party all a-weeping. Thence —]

The soldiers proceeded, with the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad before them showing them the way, until all the first day had passed, and the second, and the third. They then came to a high hill, at which they looked, and lo, upon it was a horseman of brass, on the top of whose spear was a wide and glistening head that almost deprived the beholder of sight, and on it was inscribed, O thou who comest unto me, if thou know not the way that leadeth to the City of Brass, rub the hand of the horseman, and he will turn, and then will stop, and in whatsoever direction he stoppeth, thither proceed, without fear and without difficulty; for it will lead thee to the City of Brass.—And when the Emeer Moosà had rubbed the hand of the horseman, it turned like the blinding lightning, and faced a different direction from that in which they were traveling.

The party therefore turned thither and journeyed on, and it was the right way. They took that route, and continued their course the same day and the next night until they had traversed a wide tract of country. And as they were proceeding, one day, they came to a pillar of black stone, wherein was a person sunk to his arm-pits, and he had two huge wings, and four arms; two of them like those of the sons of Adam, and two like the fore-legs of lions, with claws. He had hair upon his head like the tails of horses, and two eyes like two burning coals, and he had a third eye, in his forehead, like the eye of the lynx, from which there appeared sparks of fire. He was black and tall; and he was crying out, Extolled be the perfection of my Lord, who hath appointed me this severe affliction and painful torture until the day of resurrection! When the party beheld him, their reason fled from them, and they were stupefied at the sight of his form, and retreated in flight; and the Emeer Moosà said to the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, What is this? He answered, I know not what he is. And the Emeer said, Draw near to him, and investigate his case: perhaps he will discover it, and perhaps thou wilt learn his history. The sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad replied, May God amend the state of the Emeer! Verily we fear him.—Fear ye not, rejoined the Emeer; for he is withheld from injuring you and others by the state in which he is. So the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad drew near to him, and said to him, O thou person, what is thy name, and what is thy nature, and what hath placed thee here in this manner? And he answered him, As to me, I am an 'Efreet of the Jinn, and my name is Dáhish the son of El-Amash, and I am restrained here by the majesty, confined by the power, [of God,] tormented as long as God (to whom be ascribed might and glory!) willeth. Then the Emeer Moosà said, O sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, ask him what is the cause of his confinement in this pillar. He therefore asked respecting that, and the 'Efreet answered him, Verily my story is wonderful, and it is this:—

[The Evil Spirit narrates to them his history, being part of the famous war between Solomon and the Jinn.]

The party therefore wondered at him, and at the horrible nature of his form; and the Emeer Moosà said, There is no deity but God! Suleymán was endowed with a mighty dominion!—And the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad said to the 'Efreet, O thou, I ask thee concerning a thing of which do thou inform us. The 'Efreet replied, Ask concerning what thou wilt. And the sheykh said, Are there in this place any of the 'Efreets confined in bottles of brass from the time of Suleymán, on whom be peace? He answered, Yes, in the Sea of El-Karkar, where are a people of the descendants of Nooh (on whom be peace!), whose country the deluge reached not, and they are separated there from [the rest of] the sons of Adam.—And where, said the sheykh, is the way to the City of Brass, and the place wherein are the bottles? What distance is there between us and it? The 'Efreet answered, It is near. So the party left him and proceeded; and there appeared to them a great black object, with two [seeming] fires corresponding with each other in position, in the distance, in that black object; whereupon the Emeer Moosà said to the sheykh, What is this great black object, and what are these two corresponding fires? The guide answered him, Be rejoiced, O Emeer; for this is the City of Brass, and this is the appearance of it that I find described in the Book of Hidden Treasures; that its wall is of black stones, and it hath two towers of brass of El-Andalus, which the beholder seeth resembling two corresponding fires; and thence it is named the City of Brass. They ceased not to proceed until they arrived at it; and lo, it was lofty, strongly fortified, rising high into the air, impenetrable: the height of its walls was eighty cubits, and it had five and twenty gates, none of which would open but by means of some artifice; and there was not one gate to it that had not, within the city, one like it: such was the beauty of the construction and architecture of the city. They stopped before it, and endeavored to discover one of its gates; but they could not; and the Emeer Moosà said to the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, O sheykh, I see not to this city any gate. The sheykh replied, O Emeer, thus do I find it described in the Book of Hidden Treasures; that it hath five and twenty gates, and that none of its gates may be opened but from within the city. And how, said the Emeer, can we contrive to enter it, and divert ourselves with a view of its wonders?

Then the Emeer Moosà ordered one of his young men to mount a camel, and ride round the city, in the hope that he might discover a trace of a gate, or a place lower than that to which they were opposite. So one of his young men mounted, and proceeded around it for two days with their nights, prosecuting his journey with diligence, and not resting; and when the third day arrived, he came in sight of his companions, and he was astounded at that which he beheld of the extent of the city, and its height. Then he said, O Emeer, the easiest place in it is this place at which ye have alighted. And thereupon the Emeer Moosà took Tálib the son of Sahl, and the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, and they ascended a mountain opposite the city, and overlooking it; and when they had ascended that mountain, they saw a city than which eyes had not beheld any greater. Its pavilions were lofty, and its domes were shining; its mansions were in good condition, and its rivers were running; its trees were fruitful, and its gardens bore ripe produce. It was a city with impenetrable gates, empty, still, without a voice or a cheering inhabitant, but the owl hooting in its quarters, and birds skimming in circles in its areas, and the raven croaking in its districts and its great thoroughfare-streets, and bewailing those who had been in it. The Emeer Moosà paused, sorrowing for its being devoid of inhabitants, and its being despoiled of people and dwellers; and he said, Extolled be the perfection of Him whom ages and times change not, the Creator of the creation by his power! And while he was extolling the perfection of God, (to whom be ascribed might and glory!) he happened to look aside, and lo, there were seven tablets of white marble, appearing from a distance. So he approached them, and behold, they were sculptured and inscribed; and he ordered that their writing should be read: therefore the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad advanced and examined them and read them; and they contained admonition, and matter for example and restraint, unto those endowed with faculties of discernment. Upon the first tablet was inscribed, in the ancient Greek character,—

O son of Adam, how heedless art thou of the case of him who hath been before thee! Thy years and age have diverted thee from considering him. Knowest thou not that the cup of death will be filled for thee, and that in a short time thou wilt drink it? Look then to thyself before entering thy grave. Where are those who possessed the countries and abased the servants of God and led armies? Death hath come upon them; and God is the terminator of delights and the separator of companions and the devastator of flourishing dwellings; so He hath transported them from the amplitude of palaces to the straightness of the graves.

And in the lower part of the tablet were inscribed these verses:—

Where are the Kings and the peoplers of the earth? They have
quitted that which they have built and peopled;
And in the grave they are pledged for their past actions: there
after destruction, they have become putrid corpses.
Where are the troops? They repelled not, nor profited. And
where is that which they collected and hoarded?
The decree of the Lord of the Throne surprised them. Neither
riches nor refuge saved them from it.

And the Emeer Moosà fainted; his tears ran down upon his cheeks, and he said, By Allah, indifference to the world is the most appropriate and the most sure course! Then he caused an inkhorn and a paper to be brought, and he wrote the inscription of the first tablet; after which he drew near to the second tablet, and the third, and the fourth; and having copied what was inscribed on them, he descended from the mountain; and the world had been pictured before his eyes.

And when he came back to the troops, they passed the day devising means of entering the city; and the Emeer Moosà said to his Wezeer, Tálib the son of Sahl, and to those of his chief officers who were around him, How shall we contrive to enter the city, that we may see its wonders? Perhaps we shall find in it something by which we may ingratiate ourselves with the Prince of the Faithful.—Tálib the son of Sahl replied, May God continue the prosperity of the Emeer! Let us make a ladder, and mount upon it, and perhaps we shall gain access to the gate from within.—And the Emeer said, This is what occurred to my mind, and excellent is the advice. Then he called to the carpenters and blacksmiths, and ordered them to make straight some pieces of wood, and to construct a ladder covered with plates of iron. And they did so, and made it strong. They employed themselves in constructing it a whole month, and many men were occupied in making it. And they set it up and fixed it against the wall, and it proved to be equal to the wall in height, as though it had been made for it before that day. So the Emeer Moosà wondered at it, and said, God bless you! It seemeth, from the excellence of your work, as though ye had adapted it by measurement to the wall.—He then said to the people, Which of you will ascend this ladder, and mount upon the wall, and walk along it, and contrive means of descending into the city, that he may see how the case is, and then inform us of the mode of opening the gate? And one of them answered, I will ascend it, O Emeer, and descend and open the gate. The Emeer therefore replied, Mount. God bless thee!—Accordingly, the man ascended the ladder until he reached the top of it; when he stood, and fixed his eyes towards the city, clapped his hands, and cried out with his loudest voice, saying, Thou art beautiful! Then he cast himself down into the city, and his flesh became mashed with his bones. So the Emeer Moosà said, This is the action of the rational. How then will the insane act? If we do thus with all our companions, there will not remain of them one; and we shall be unable to accomplish our affair, and the affair of the Prince of the Faithful. Depart ye; for we have no concern with this city.—But one of them said, Perhaps another than this may be more steady than he. And a second ascended, and a third, and a fourth, and a fifth; and they ceased not to ascend by that ladder to the top of the wall, one after another, until twelve men of them had gone, acting as acted the first. Therefore the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad said, There is none for this affair but myself, and the experienced is not like the inexperienced. But the Emeer Moosà said to him, Thou shalt not do that, nor will I allow thee to ascend to the top of this wall; for shouldst thou die, thou wouldst be the cause of the death of us all, and there would not remain of us one; since thou art the guide of the party. The sheykh however replied, Perhaps the object will be accomplished by my means, through the will of God, whose name be exalted! And thereupon all the people agreed to his ascending.

Then the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad arose, and encouraged himself, and having said, In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful!—he ascended the ladder, repeating the praises of God (whose name be exalted!) and reciting the Verses of Safety, until he reached the top of the wall; when he clapped his hands, and fixed his eyes. The people therefore all called out to him, and said, O sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, do it not, and cast not thyself down! And they said, Verily to God we belong, and verily unto him we return! If the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad fall, we all perish!—Then the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad laughed immoderately, and sat a long time repeating the praises of God, (whose name be exalted!) and reciting the Verses of Safety; after which he rose with energy, and called out with his loudest voice, O Emeer, no harm shall befall you; for God (to whom be ascribed might and glory!) hath averted from me the effect of the artifice and fraudulence of the Devil, through the blessing resulting from the utterance of the words, In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.—So the Emeer said to him, What hast thou seen, O sheykh? He answered, When I reached the top of the wall, I beheld ten damsels, like moons, who made a sign with their hands, as though they would say, Come to us. And it seemed to me that beneath me was a sea (or great river) of water; whereupon I desired to cast myself down, as our companions did: but I beheld them dead; so I withheld myself from them, and recited some words of the Book of God, (whose name be exalted!) whereupon God averted from me the influence of those damsels' artifice, and they departed from me; therefore I cast not myself down, and God repelled from me the effect of their artifice and enchantment. There is no doubt that this is an enchantment and an artifice which the people of this city contrived in order to repel from it every one who should desire to look down upon it, and wish to obtain access to it; and these our companions are laid dead.

He then walked along the wall till he came to the two towers of brass, when he saw that they had two gates of gold, without locks upon them, or any sign of the means of opening them. Therefore the sheykh paused as long as God willed, and looking attentively, he saw in the middle of one of the gates a figure of a horseman of brass, having one hand extended, as though he were pointing with it, and on it was an inscription, which the sheykh read, and lo, it contained these words:—Turn the pin that is in the middle of the front of the horseman's body twelve times, and then the gate will open. So he examined the horseman, and in the middle of the front of his body was a pin, strong, firm, well fixed; and he turned it twelve times; whereupon the gate opened immediately, with a noise like thunder; and the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad entered. He was a learned man, acquainted with all languages and characters. And he walked on until he entered a long passage, whence he descended some steps, and he found a place with handsome wooden benches, on which were people dead, and over their heads were elegant shields, and keen swords, and strung bows, and notched arrows. And behind the [next] gate were a bar of iron, and barricades of wood, and locks of delicate fabric, and strong apparatus. Upon this, the sheykh said within himself, Perhaps the keys are with these people. Then he looked, and lo, there was a sheykh who appeared to be the oldest of them, and he was upon a high wooden bench among the dead men. So the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad said, May not the keys of the city be with this sheykh? Perhaps he was the gate-keeper of the city, and these were under his authority. He therefore drew near to him, and lifted up his garments, and lo, the keys were hung to his waist. At the sight of them, the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad rejoiced exceedingly; his reason almost fled from him in consequence of his joy: and he took the keys, approached the gate, opened the locks, and pulled the gate and the barricades and other apparatus which opened, and the gate also opened, with a noise like thunder, by reason of its greatness and terribleness, and the enormousness of its apparatus. Upon this, the sheykh exclaimed, God is most great!—and the people made the same exclamation with him, rejoicing at the event. The Emeer Moosà also rejoiced at the safety of the sheykh 'Abd-Es-Samad, and at the opening of the gate of the city; the people thanked the sheykh for that which he had done, and all the troops hastened to enter the gate. But the Emeer Moosà cried out to them, saying to them, O people, if all of us enter, we shall not be secure from some accident that may happen. Half shall enter, and half shall remain behind.

The Emeer Moosà then entered the gate, and with him half of the people, who bore their weapons of war. And the party saw their companions lying dead: so they buried them. They saw also the gate-keepers and servants and chamberlains and lieutenants lying upon beds of silk, all of them dead. And they entered the market of the city, and beheld a great market, with lofty buildings, none of which projected beyond another: the shops were open, and the scales hung up, and the utensils of brass ranged in order, and the kháns were full of all kinds of goods. And they saw the merchants dead in their shops: their skins were dried, and their bones were carious, and they had become examples to him who would be admonished. They saw likewise four markets of particular shops filled with wealth. And they left this place, and passed on to the silk-market, in which were silks and brocades interwoven with red gold and white silver upon various colours, and the owners were dead, lying upon skins, and appearing almost as though they would speak. Leaving these, they went on to the market of jewels and pearls and jacinths; and they left it, and passed on to the market of the money-changers, whom they found dead, with varieties of silks beneath them, and their shops were filled with gold and silver. These they left, and they proceeded to the market of the perfumers; and lo, their shops were filled with varieties of perfumes, and bags of musk, and ambergris, and aloes-wood, and nedd, and camphor, and other things; and the owners were all dead, not having with them any food. And when they went forth from the market of the perfumers, they found near unto it a palace, decorated, and strongly constructed; and they entered it, and found banners unfurled, and drawn swords, and strung bows, and shields hung up by chains of gold and silver, and helmets gilded with red gold. And in the passages of that palace were benches of ivory, ornamented with plates of brilliant gold, and with silk, on which were men whose skins had dried upon the bones: the ignorant would imagine them to be sleeping; but, from the want of food, they had died, and tasted mortality. Upon this, the Emeer Moosà paused, extolling the perfection of God (whose name be exalted!) and his holiness, and contemplating the beauty of that palace.

[They find the palace a marvel of splendor, but as awfully silent and mausoleum-like as the rest of the city; and soon reach a magnificent hall in which lies the dead body of «Jedmur, the Daughter of the King of the Amalekites,» magnificently laid in state, and magically preserved and protected. Tálib unwisely and covetously attempts to rob the corpse of jewels; and is instantly beheaded by its enchanted guards. The Emeer Moosà and the sage 'Abd-Es-Samad, however, leave the place in safety, return to Upper Egypt and Syria by way of the Country of the Blacks, succeed in securing twelve of the wonderful bottles containing Jinn,—and the tale concludes with the Emeer Moosà's resignation of his throne that he may die in Jerusalem, so profoundly has he been affected by the adventure.]

FROM ‹THE HISTORY OF KING OMAR BEN ENNUMAN, AND HIS SONS SHERKAN AND ZOULMEKAN›

Nights 15, 16, 17, and 18: Translation of Professor John Payne

THE MEETING OF PRINCE SHERKAN AND PRINCESS ABRIZEH

There reigned once in the City of Peace [Bagdad], before the Khalifate of Abdulmelik ben Merwan, a king called Omar ben Ennuman, who was of the mighty giants, and had subdued the kings of Persia and the emperors of the East, for none could warm himself at his fire nor cope with him in battle; and when he was angry there came sparks out of his nostrils. He had gotten him dominion over all countries, and God had subjected unto him all creatures; his commands were obeyed in all the great cities, and his armies penetrated the most distant lands: the East and West came under his rule, with the regions between them, Hind and Sind and China and Hejaz and Yemen and the islands of India and China, Syria and Mesopotamia and the lands of the blacks and the islands of the ocean, and all the famous rivers of the earth, Jaxartes and Bactrus and Nile and Euphrates. He sent his ambassadors to the farthest parts of the earth to fetch him true report, and they returned with tidings of justice and peace, bringing him assurance of loyalty and obedience, and invocations of blessings on his head; for he was a right noble king, and there came to him gifts and tribute from all parts of the world. He had a son called Sherkan, who was one of the prodigies of the age and the likest of all men to his father, who loved him with an exceeding love and had appointed him to be king after him. The prince grew up till he reached man's estate, and was twenty years old, and God subjected all men to him, for he was gifted with great might and prowess in battle, humbling the champions and destroying all who made head against him. So, before long, this Sherkan became famous in all quarters of the world, and his father rejoiced in him; and his might waxed till he passed all bounds, and magnified himself, taking by storm the citadels and strong places.

[The Prince being sent to assist King Afridoun, of the Greeks, against an enemy, is intrusted with an army of ten thousand soldiers, and leaves Bagdad in military state.]

Then they loaded the beasts and beat the drums and blew the clarions and unfurled the banners and the standards, whilst Sherkan mounted, with the Vizier Dendan by his side, and the standards waving over them; and the army set out and fared on with the [Greek] ambassadors in the van till the day departed and the night came, when they halted and encamped for the night. On the morrow, as soon as God brought in the day, they took horse and continued their march, nor did they cease to press onward, guided by the ambassadors, for the space of twenty days. On the twenty-first day, at nightfall, they came to a wide and fertile valley whose sides were thickly wooded and covered with grass, and there Sherkan called a three-days' halt. So they dismounted and pitched their tents, dispersing right and left in the valley, whilst the Vizier Dendan and the ambassadors alighted in the midst.

As for Sherkan, when he had seen the tents pitched and the troops dispersed on either side, and had commanded his officers and attendants to camp beside the Vizier Dendan, he gave reins to his horse, being minded to explore the valley, and himself to mount guard over the army, having regard to his father's injunctions and to the fact that they had reached the frontier of the

Land of Roum and were now in the enemy's country. So he rode on alone, along the valley, till a fourth part of the night was past, when he grew weary and sleep overcame him so that he could no longer spur his horse. Now he was used to sleep on horseback; so when drowsiness got the better of him, he fell asleep, and the horse paced on with him half the night and entered a forest: but Sherkan awoke not till the steed smote the earth with his hoof. Then he started from sleep and found himself among trees: and the moon arose and lighted the two horizons. He was troubled at finding himself alone in this place, and spoke the words which whoso says shall never be confounded—that is to say, « There is no power and no virtue but in GOD, the most High, the Supreme! » But as he rode on, in fear of the wild beasts, behold the trees thinned out, and the moon shone out upon a meadow as it were one of the meads of paradise, and he heard therein the noise of talk and pleasant laughter, such as ravishes the wit of men. So King Sherkan dismounted, and tying his horse to a tree, fared on a little further, till he espied a stream of running water, and heard a woman talking and saying in Arabic, « By the virtue of the Messiah, this is not handsome of you! But whoso speaks the word I will throw her down and bind her with her girdle! » He followed in the direction of the voice, and saw gazelles frisking and wild cattle pasturing, and birds in their various voices expressing joy and gladness; and the earth was embroidered with all manner flowers and green herbs, even as says of it the poet, in the following verses:—

Earth has no fairer sight to show than this its
blossom-time, With all the gently running streams
that wander o'er its face,
It is indeed the handiwork of God Omnipotent, The
Lord of every noble gift, and Giver of all grace!

Midmost the meadow stood a monastery, and within the inclosure a citadel that rose high into the air in the light of the moon. The stream passed through the midst of the monastery; and therenigh sat ten damsels like moons, high-bosomed maids clad in dresses and ornaments that dazzled the eyes, as says of them the poet:—

The meadow glitters with the troops Of lovely ones
that wander there;
Its grace and beauty doubled are By these that are
so passing fair;

Virgins, that with their swimming gait, The hearts of
all that see ensnare,
Along whose necks, like trails of grapes, Stream down
the tresses of their hair;
Proudly they walk, with eyes that dart The shafts and
arrows of despair,
And all the champions of the world Are slain by
their seductive air.

Sherkan looked at the ten girls, and saw in their midst a lady like the moon at its full, with ringleted and shining forehead, great black eyes and curling brow-locks, perfect in person and attributes, as says the poet:—

Her beauty beamed on me with glances wonder-bright: The
slender Syrian spears are not so straight and slight:
She laid her veil aside, and, lo, her cheeks rose-red! All manner of loveliness was in their sweetest sight
The locks that o'er her brow fell down, were like the night,
From out of which there shines a morning of delight.

Then Sherkan heard her say to the girls, «Come on, that I may wrestle with you, ere the moon set and the dawn come.» So they came up to her, one after another, and she overthrew them, one by one, and bound their hands behind them, with their girdles. When she had thrown them all, there turned to her an old woman who was before her, and said, as if she were wroth with her, «O shameless! dost thou glory in overthrowing these girls? Behold, I am an old woman, yet have I thrown them forty times! So what hast thou to boast of? But if thou have strength to wrestle with me, stand up that I may grip thee, and put thy head between thy feet.» The young lady smiled at her words, although her heart was full of anger against her, and said, «O my lady Dhat ed Dewahi, wilt indeed wrestle with me—or dost thou jest with me?» «I mean to wrestle with thee in very deed,» replied she. «Stand up to me then,» said the damsel, «if thou have strength to do so!» When the old woman heard this she was sore enraged, and her hair stood on end like that of a hedgehog. Then she sprang up, whilst the damsel confronted her . . . and they took hold of one another, whilst Sherkan raised his eyes to heaven and prayed to God that the damsel might conquer the old hag. Presently . . . the old woman strove to free herself, and in the struggle wriggled out of the girl's hands and fell on her back . . . and behold the young lady . . . throwing over her a veil of fine silk, helped her to dress herself, making excuses to her and saying, « O my lady Dhat ed Dewahi, I did not mean to throw thee so roughly, but thou wriggledst out of my hands; so praised be God for safety.» She returned her no answer, but rose in her confusion and walked away out of sight, leaving the young lady standing alone, by the other girls thrown down and bound.

Then said Sherkan, « To every fortune there is a cause. Sleep fell not on me, nor did the steed bear me hither but for my good fortune; for of a surety this damsel and what is with her shall be my prize.» So he turned back and mounted, and drew his scimitar; then he gave his horse the spur and he started off with him like an arrow from a bow, whilst he brandished his naked blade and cried out, « God is most great!» When the damsel saw him she sprang to her feet, and running to the bank of the river, which was there six cubits wide, made a spring and landed on the other side, where she turned, and standing cried out in a loud voice, « Who art thou, sirrah, that breakest in on our pasture as if thou wert charging an army? Whence comest thou and whither art thou bound? Speak the truth and it shall profit thee, and do not lie, for lying is of the losel's fashion. Doubtless thou hast strayed this night from thy road, that thou hast happened on this place. So tell me what thou seekest: if thou wouldst have us set thee in the right road, we will do so; or if thou seek help we will help thee.»

When Sherkan heard her words he replied, « I am a stranger of the Muslims, who am come out by myself in quest of booty, and I have found no fairer purchase this moonlit night than these ten damsels; so I will take them and rejoin my comrades with them.» Quoth she, « I would have thee to know that thou hast not yet come at the booty; and as for these ten damsels, by Allah, they are no purchase for thee! Indeed the fairest purchase thou canst look for is to win free of this place: for thou art in a mead, where, if we gave one cry, there would be with us anon four thousand knights. Did I not tell thee that lying is shameful?» And he said, « The fortunate man is he to whom God sufficeth, and who hath no need of other than him.» « By the virtue of the Messiah,» replied she, « did I not fear to have thy death at my hand, I would give a cry that would fill the meadow on thee, with horse and foot! but I have pity on the stranger; so, if thou seek booty, I require of thee that thou dismount from thy horse, and swear to me by thy faith that thou wilt not approach me with aught of arms, and we will wrestle — I and thou. If thou throw me, lay me on thy horse and take all of us to thy booty; and if I throw thee, thou shalt be at my commandment. Swear this to me; for I fear thy perfidy, since experience has it that as long as perfidy is in men's natures, to trust in every one is weakness. But if thou wilt swear I will come over to thee." Quoth Sherkan, "Impose on me whatever oath thou deemest binding, and I will swear not to draw near thee until thou hast made thy preparations, and sayest 'Come wrestle with me.' If thou throw me I have wealth wherewith to ransom myself, and if I throw thee I shall get fine purchase." Then said she, "Swear to me by Him who hath lodged the soul in the body and given laws to mankind that thou wilt not hurt me with aught of violence save in the way of wrestling — else mayest thou die out of the pale of Islam." "By Allah," exclaimed Sherkan, "if a Cadi should swear me, though he were Cadi of the Cadis, he would not impose on me the like of this oath!" Then he took the oath she required, and tied his horse to a tree, sunken in the sea of reverie, and saying in himself, "Glory to Him who fashioned her!" Then he girt himself, and made ready for wrestling, and said to her, "Cross the stream to me." Quoth she, "It is not for me to come to thee: if thou wilt, do thou cross over to me." "I cannot do that," replied he; and she said, "O boy! I will come to thee." So she gathered her skirts, and making a spring landed on the other side of the river by him; whereupon he drew near to her, wondering at her beauty and grace, and saw a form that the hand of Omnipotence had turned with the leaves of Jinn, and which had been fostered by divine solicitude, a form on which the zephyrs of fair fortune had blown, and over whose creation favorable planets had presided. Then she called out to him saying, "O Muslim, come and wrestle before the daybreak!" and tucked up her sleeves, showing a fore-arm like fresh curd; the whole place was lighted up by its whiteness and Sherkan was dazzled by it. Then he bent forward and clapped his hands, and she did the like, and they took hold and gripped each other. He laid his hands on her slender waist . . . and fell a trembling like the Persian reed in the hurricane. So she lifted him up, and throwing him to the ground sat down on his breast. Then she said to him, "O Muslim, it is lawful among you to kill Christians: what sayest thou to my killing thee?" "O my lady," replied he, «as for killing me, it is unlawful; for our Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) hath forbidden the slaying of women and children and old men and monks.» «Since this was revealed unto your prophet,» rejoined she, «it behooves us to be even with him therein; so rise: I give thee thy life, for beneficence is not lost upon men.» Then she got up, and he rose and brushed the earth from his head, and she said to him, «Be not abashed; but indeed one who enters the land of the Greeks in quest of booty and to succor kings against kings, how comes it that there is no strength in him to defend himself against a woman?» «It was not lack of strength in me,» replied he, «nor was it thy strength that overthrew me, but thy beauty; so if thou wilt, grant me another bout, it will be of thy favor.» She laughed and said, «I grant thee this: but these damsels have been long bound, and their arms and shoulders are weary, and it were fitting I should loose them, since this next bout may peradventure be a long one.» Then she went up to the girls, and unbinding them said to them in the Greek tongue, «Go and put yourselves in safety, till I have brought to naught this Muslim.» So they went away, whilst Sherkan looked at them, and they gazed at him and the young lady. Then he and she drew near again and set to. . . . But [again by admiration of her beauty] his strength failed him, and she feeling this, lifted him in her hands swifter than the blinding lightning and threw him to the ground. He fell on his back, and she said to him, «Rise: I give thee thy life a second time. I spared thee before for the sake of thy prophet, for that he forbade the killing of women, and I do so this second time because of thy weakness and tender age, and strangerhood: but I charge thee, if there be in the army sent by King Omar ben Ennuman a stronger than thou, send him hither and tell him of me.» «By Allah, O my lady,» replied Sherkan (and indeed he was greatly incensed against her), «it was not by thy strength that thou overthrewest me, but by [thy beauty], so that nor wit nor foresight was left in me. But now, if thou have a mind to try another fall with me, with my wits about me, I have a right to this one bout more by the rules of the game, for my presence of mind has now returned to me.» «Hast thou not had enough of wrestling, O conquered one?» rejoined she. «However, come, if thou wilt: but know that this bout must be the last.» Then they took hold of each other, and he set to in earnest and warded himself against being thrown down: so they wrestled awhile and the damsel found in him strength such as she had not before observed, and said to him, «O Muslim, thou art on thy guard!» «Yes,» replied he, «thou knowest that there remaineth but this bout, and after each of us will go his own way.» She laughed and he laughed too: then she seized the opportunity to bore in upon him unawares, and gripping him by the thigh, threw him to the ground, so that he fell on his back. She laughed at him and said, «Thou art surely an eater of bran: for thou art like a Bedouin bonnet that falls off at a touch, or a child's toy that a puff of air overturns. Out on thee, thou poor creature! Go back to the army of the Muslims and send us other than thyself, for thou lackest thews; and cry as among the Arabs and Persians and Turks and Medes, ‹Whoso has might in him let him come to us!›» Then she made a spring and landed on the other side of the stream and said to Sherkan laughing, «It goes to my heart to part with thee! get thee to thy friends, O my lord, before the morning, lest the knights come upon thee and take thee on the points of their lances. Thou hast not strength enough to defend thee against women; so how couldst thou make head against men and cavaliers!» And she turned to go back to the monastery. Sherkan was confounded, and called out to her, saying «O my lady! Wilt thou go away, and leave the wretched stranger, the broken-hearted slave of love?» So she turned to him laughing, and said, «What wouldst thou? I grant thy prayer.» «Have I set foot in thy country and tasted the sweetness of thy favors,» replied Sherkan, «and shall I return without eating of thy victual and tasting of thy hospitality? Indeed, I am become one of thy servitors.» Quoth she, «None but the base refuses hospitality: on my head and eyes be it! Do me the favor to mount and ride along the stream, abreast of me, for thou art my guest.» At this Sherkan rejoiced, and hastening back to his horse, mounted and rode along the river-bank, keeping abreast of her, till he came to a drawbridge that hung by pulleys and chains of steel, made fast with hooks and padlocks. Here stood the ten damsels awaiting the lady, who spoke to one of them in the Greek tongue and said to her, «Go to him; take his horse's rein and bring him over into the monastery.» . . . They went on till they reached a vaulted gate, arched over with marble. This she opened, and entered with Sherkan into a long vestibule, vaulted with ten arches, from each of which hung a lamp of crystal, shining like the rays of the sun. The damsels met her at the end of the vestibule, bearing perfumed flambeaux and having on their heads kerchiefs embroidered with all manner of jewels, and went on before her, till they came to the inward of the monastery, where Sherkan saw couches set up all around, facing one another and overhung with curtains spangled with gold. The floor was paved with all kinds of variegated marbles, and in the midst was a basin of water with four and twenty spouts of gold around it from which issued water like liquid silver; whilst at the upper end stood a throne covered with silks of royal purple. Then said the damsel, «O my lord, mount this throne.» So he seated himself on it, and she withdrew: and when she had been absent awhile, he asked the servants of her, and they said, «She hath gone to her sleeping-chamber; but we will serve thee as thou shalt order.» So they set before him rare meats, and he ate till he was satisfied, when they brought him a basin of gold and an ewer of silver and he washed his hands. Then his mind reverted to his troops, and he was troubled, knowing not what had befallen them in his absence and thinking how he had forgotten his father's injunctions, so that he abode, oppressed with anxiety and repenting of what he had done, till the dawn broke and the day appeared, when he lamented and sighed and became drowned in the sea of melancholy, repeating the following verses:—

«I lack not of prudence, and yet in this case, I've been fooled;
so what shift shall avail unto me?
If any could ease me of love and its stress, Of my might and
my virtue I'd set myself free.
But alas! my heart's lost in maze of desire, And no helper save
God in my strait can I see.

Hardly had he finished when up came more than twenty damsels like moons, encompassing the young lady, who appeared among them as the full moon among stars. She was clad in royal brocade, and girt with a woven girdle set with various kinds of jewels that straitly clasped her waist. . . . On her head she wore a network of pearls, gemmed with various kinds of jewels, and she moved with a coquettish, swimming gait, swaying wonder-gracefully, whilst the damsels held up her skirts. . . . She fixed her eyes on him, and considered him awhile, till she was assured of him, when she came up to him and said, «Indeed the place is honored and illumined with thy presence, O

Sherkan! How didst thou pass the night, O hero, after we went away and left thee? Verily, lying is a defect and a reproach in kings; especially in great kings: and thou art Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman; so henceforth tell me naught but truth, and strive not to keep the secret of thy condition, for falsehood engenders hatred and enmity. The arrow of destiny hath fallen upon thee, and it behooves thee to show resignation and submission." When Sherkan heard what she said, he saw nothing for it but to tell her the truth: so he said, "I am indeed Sherkan, son of Omar ben Ennuman; whom fortune hath afflicted and cast into this place: so now do whatsoever thou wilt."

FROM ‹SINDBAD THE SEAMAN AND SINDBAD THE LANDSMAN›

Portions of Nights 536 to 542, presenting the Introduction and the first of the seven ‹Voyages›: Translation of Captain Sir Richard Burton

There lived in the city of Bagdad, during the reign of the Commander of the Faithful, Harun al-Rashid, a man named Sindbad the Hammal [Porter], one in poor case, who bore burdens on his head for hire. It happened to him one day of great heat that whilst he was carrying a heavy load, he became exceeding weary and sweated profusely; the heat and the weight alike oppressing him. Presently, as he was passing the gate of a merchant's house, before which the ground was swept and watered, and where the air was temperate, he sighted a broad bench beside the door; so he set his load thereon, to take rest and smell the air.—

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

Now when it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-Seventh Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the Hammal set his load upon the bench to take rest and smell the air, there came out upon him from the court-door a pleasant breeze and a delicious fragrance. He sat down on the edge of the bench, and at once heard from within the melodious sound of lutes and other stringed instruments, and mirth-exciting voices singing and reciting, together with the song of birds warbling and glorifying Almighty Allah in various tunes and tongues; turtles, mockingbirds, merles, nightingales, cushats, and stone-curlews: whereat he marveled in himself and was moved to mighty joy and solace. Then he went up to the gate and saw within a great flower-garden wherein were pages and black slaves, and such a train of servants and attendants and so forth as is found only with Kings and Sultans; and his nostrils were greeted with the savory odors of all manner meats rich and delicate, and delicious and generous wines. So he raised his eyes heavenwards and said, « Glory to Thee, O Lord, O Creator and Provider, who providest whomso Thou wilt without count or stint! O mine Holy One, I cry Thee pardon for all sins and turn to Thee repenting of all offenses! O Lord, there is no gainsaying Thee in Thine ordinance and Thy dominion, neither wilt Thou be questioned of that Thou dost, for Thou indeed over all things art Almighty! Extolled be Thy perfection: whom Thou wilt Thou makest poor and whom Thou wilt Thou makest rich! Whom Thou wilt Thou exaltest and whom Thou wilt Thou abasest, and there is no god but Thou! How mighty is Thy majesty and how enduring Thy dominion and how excellent Thy government! Verily, Thou favorest whom Thou wilt of Thy servants, whereby the owner of this place abideth in all joyance of life and delighteth himself with pleasant scents and delicious meats and exquisite wines of all kinds. For indeed Thou appointest unto Thy creatures that which Thou wilt and that which Thou hast foreordained unto them; wherefore are some weary and others are at rest, and some enjoy fair fortune and affluence whilst others suffer the extreme of travail and misery, even as I do.» And he fell to reciting:

How many by my labors, that evermore endure, All goods of
life enjoy and in cooly shade recline?
Each morn that dawns I wake in travail and in woe, And
strange is my condition and my burden gars me pine:
Many others are in luck and from miseries are free, And Fortune never loads them with loads the like o' mine:
They live their happy days in all solace and delight; Eat, drink,
and dwell in honor 'mid the noble and the digne:
All living things were made of a little drop of sperm, Thine
origin is mine and my provenance is thine;
Yet the difference and distance 'twixt the twain of us are far As
the difference of savor 'twixt vinegar and wine:
But at Thee, O God All-wise! I venture not to rail Whose ordinance is just and whose justice cannot fail.

When Sindbad the Porter had made an end of reciting his verses, he bore up his burden and was about to fare on, when there came forth to him from the gate a little foot-page, fair of face and shapely of shape and dainty of dress, who caught him by the hand, saying, « Come in and speak with my lord, for he calleth for thee.» The Porter would have excused himself to the page, but the lad would take no refusal; so he left his load with the doorkeeper in the vestibule and followed the boy into the house, which he found to be a goodly mansion, radiant and full of majesty, till he brought him to a grand sitting-room wherein he saw a company of nobles and great lords, seated at tables garnished with all manner of flowers and sweet-scented herbs, besides great plenty of dainty viands and fruits dried and fresh and confections and wines of the choicest vintages. There also were instruments of music and mirth, and lovely slave-girls playing and singing. All the company was ranged according to rank, and in the highest place sat a man of worshipful and noble aspect, whose beard-sides hoariness had stricken; and he was stately of stature and fair of favor, agreeable of aspect and full of gravity and dignity and majesty. So Sindbad the Porter was confounded at that which he beheld, and said in himself, « By Allah, this must be either a piece of Paradise or some king's palace!» Then he saluted the company with much respect, praying for their prosperity; and kissing ground before them, stood with his head bowed down in humble attitude.—

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

Now when it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-Eighth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Porter, after kissing ground between their hands, stood with his head bowed down in humble attitude. The master of the house bade him draw near and be seated and bespoke him kindly, bidding him welcome. Then he set before him various kinds of viands, rich and delicious, and the Porter, after saying his Bismillah, fell to and ate his fill, after which he exclaimed, « Praised be Allah whatso be our case!» and washing his hands, returned thanks to the company for his entertainment. Quoth the host, « Thou art welcome and thy day is a-blessed. But what are thy name and calling?» Quoth the other, « O my lord, my name is

Sindbad the Hammal, and I carry folk's goods on my head for hire.» The house-master smiled and rejoined, «Know, O Porter, that thy name is even as mine, for I am Sindbad the Seaman; and now, O Porter, I would have thee let me hear the couplets thou recitedst at the gate anon.» The Porter was abashed and replied, «Allah upon thee! Excuse me, for toil and travail and lack of luck when the hand is empty teach a man ill manners and boorish ways.» Said the host, «Be not ashamed; thou art become my brother: but repeat to me the verses, for they pleased me whenas I heard thee recite them at the gate.» Hereupon the Porter repeated the couplets, and they delighted the merchant, who said to him:—

Know, O Hammal, that my story is a wonderful one, and thou shalt hear all that befell me and all I underwent ere I rose to this state of prosperity and became the lord of this place wherein thou seest me; for I came not to this high estate save after travail sore and perils galore, and how much toil and trouble have I not suffered in days of yore! I have made seven voyages, by each of which hangeth a marvelous tale, such as confoundeth the reason, and all this came to pass by doom of fortune and fate; for from what destiny doth write there is neither refuge nor flight.

Know then, good my lords (continued he), that I am about to relate the

First Voyage of Sindbad Hight the Seaman

My father was a merchant, one of the notables of my native place, a moneyed man and ample of means, who died whilst I was yet a child, leaving me much wealth in money and lands, and farmhouses. When I grew up I laid hands on the whole and ate of the best and drank freely and wore rich clothes and lived lavishly, companioning and consorting with youths of my own age, and considering that this course of life would continue for ever and ken no change. Thus did I for a long time, but at last I awoke from my heedlessness, and returning to my senses, I found my wealth had become unwealth and my condition ill-conditioned, and all I once hent had left my hand. And recovering my reason I was stricken with dismay and confusion, and bethought me of a saying of our lord Solomon, son of David, (upon whom be Peace!) which I had heard aforetime from my father, «Three things are better than other three: the day of death is better than the day of birth, a live dog is better than a dead lion, and the grave is better than want.» Then I got together my remains of estates and property and sold all, even my clothes, for three thousand dirhams, with which I resolved to travel to foreign parts, remembering the saying of the poet:—

By means of toil man shall scale the height; Who to fame aspires mustn't sleep o' night:
Who seeketh pearl in the deep must dive, Winning weal and wealth by his main and might:
And who seeketh Fame without toil and strife Th' impossible seeketh and wasteth life.

So taking heart I bought me goods, merchandise, and all needed for a voyage, and, impatient to be at sea, I embarked, with a company of merchants, on board a ship bound for Bassorah. There we again embarked and sailed many days and nights, and we passed from isle to isle and sea to sea and shore to shore, buying and selling and bartering everywhere the ship touched, and continued our course till we came to an island as it were a garth of the garden of Paradise. Here the captain cast anchor, and making fast to the shore, put out the landing planks. So all on board landed and made furnaces, and lighting fires therein, busied themselves in various ways, some cooking and some washing, whilst other some walked about the island for solace, and the crew fell to eating and drinking and playing and sporting. I was one of the walkers; but as we were thus engaged, behold the master, who was standing on the gunwale, cried out to us at the top of his voice, saying, «Ho there! passengers, run for your lives and hasten back to the ship and leave your gear and save yourselves from destruction, Allah preserve you! For this island whereon ye stand is no true island, but a great fish stationary a-middlemost of the sea, whereon the sand hath settled and trees have sprung up of old time, so that it is become like unto an island; but when ye lighted fires on it, it felt the heat and moved; and in a moment it will sink with you into the sea and ye will all be drowned. So leave your gear and seek your safety ere ye die.»—

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

Now when it was the Five Hundred and Thirty-ninth Night,

She said, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when the ship-master cried to the passengers, «Leave your gear and seek safety ere ye die,» all who heard him left gear and goods, clothes washed and unwashed, fire-pots and brass cooking-pots, and fled back to the ship for their lives, and some reached it while others (among whom was I) did not, for suddenly the island shook and sank into the abysses of the deep, with all that were thereon, and the dashing sea surged over it with clashing waves. I sank with the others down, down into the deep, but Almighty Allah preserved me from drowning and threw in my way a great wooden tub of those that had served the ship's company for tubbing. I gripped it for the sweetness of life, and bestriding it like one riding, paddled with my feet like oars, whilst the waves tossed me as in sport right and left. Meanwhile, the captain made sail and departed with those who had reached the ship, regardless of the drowning and the drowned; and I ceased not following the vessel with my eyes, till she was hid from sight and I made sure of death. Darkness closed in upon me while in this plight, and the winds and waves bore me on all that night and the next day, till the tub brought to with me under the lee of a lofty island, with trees overhanging the tide. I caught hold of a branch and by its aid clambered up on to the land, after coming nigh upon death; but when I reached the shore, I found my legs cramped and numbed, and my feet bore traces of the nibbling of fish upon their soles; withal I had felt nothing for excess of anguish and fatigue. I threw myself down on the island-ground, like a dead man, and drowned in desolation swooned away, nor did I return to my senses till next morning, when the sun rose and revived me. But I found my feet swollen, so made shift to move by shuffling on my breech and crawling on my knees, for in that island were found store of fruit and springs of sweet water. I ate of the fruits, which strengthened me; and thus I abode days and nights, till my life seemed to return and my spirits began to revive and I was better able to move about. So after due consideration I fell to exploring the island and diverting myself with gazing upon all things that Allah Almighty had created there; and rested under the trees, from one of which I cut me a staff to lean upon. One day as I walked along the marge, I caught sight of some object in the distance, and thought it a wild beast or one of the monster creatures of the sea; but as I drew near it, looking hard the while, I saw that it was a noble mare, tethered on the beach. Presently I went up to her, but she cried out against me with a great cry, so that I trembled for fear and turned to go away, when there came forth a man from under the earth and followed me, crying out and saying, «Who and whence art thou, and what caused thee to come hither?» «O my lord,» answered I, «I am in very sooth a waif, a stranger, and was left to drown with sundry others by the ship we voyaged in; but Allah graciously sent me a wooden tub, so I saved myself thereon, and it floated with me till the waves cast me up on this island.» When he heard this he took my hand, and saying «Come with me,» carried me into a great Sardáb, or underground chamber, which was spacious as a saloon. He made me sit down at its upper end; then he brought me somewhat of food, and, being anhungered, I ate till I was satisfied and refreshed. And when he had put me at mine ease he questioned me of myself, and I told him all that had befallen me from first to last. And as he wondered at my adventure, I said, «By Allah, O my lord, excuse me; I have told thee the truth of my case and the accident which betided me. And now I desire that thou tell me who thou art, and why thou abidest here under the earth, and why thou hast tethered yonder mare on the brink of the sea.» Answered he, «Know that I am one of the several who are stationed in different parts of this island, and we are of the grooms of King Mihrján, and under our hand are all his horses. . . . And Inshallah! I will bear thee to King Mihrján—»

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

Now when it was the Five Hundred and Fortieth Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that the Syce said to Sindbad the Seaman, «I will bear thee to King Mihrján and show thee our country. And know that hadst thou not happened on us, thou hadst perished miserably and none had known of thee; but I will be the means of the saving of thy life and of thy return to thine own land.» I called down blessings on him and thanked him for his kindness and courtesy. . . . After this, we sat awhile, till the rest of the grooms came up, each leading a mare, and seeing me with their fellow-Syce questioned me of my case, and I repeated my story to them. Thereupon they drew near me, and spreading the table, ate and invited me to eat; so I ate with them, after which they took horse, and mounting me on one of the mares, set out with me and fared on without ceasing, till we came to the capital city of King Mihrján, and going in to him acquainted him with my story. Then he sent for me, and when they set me before him and salams had been exchanged, he gave me a cordial welcome and wishing me long life bade me tell him my tale. So I related to him all that I had seen and all that had befallen me from first to last, whereat he marveled and said to me, « By Allah, O my son, thou hast indeed been miraculously preserved! Were not the term of thy life a long one, thou hadst not escaped from these straits; but praised be Allah for safety! » Then he spoke cheerily to me and entreated me with kindness and consideration; moreover, he made me his agent for the port and registrar of all ships that entered the harbor. I attended him regularly, to receive his commandments, and he favored me and did me all manner of kindness and invested me with costly and splendid robes. Indeed, I was high in credit with him, as an intercessor for the folk and an intermediary between them and him, when they wanted aught of him. I abode thus a great while, and as often as I passed through the city to the port, I questioned the merchants and travelers and sailors of the city of Baghdad; so haply I might hear of an occasion to return to my native land, but could find none who knew it or knew any who resorted thither. At this I was chagrined, for I was weary of long strangerhood; and my disappointment endured for a time till one day, going in to King Mihrján, I found with him a company of Indians. I saluted them and they returned my salam; and politely welcomed me and asked me of my country—

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased saying her permitted say.

Now when it was the Five Hundred and Forty-first Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that Sindbad the Seaman said:—When they asked me of my country I questioned them of theirs, and they told me that they were of various castes, some being called Shakiriyah, who are the noblest of their castes and neither oppress nor offer violence to any, and other Brahmans, a folk who abstain from wine, but live in delight and solace and merriment, and own camels and horses and cattle. Moreover, they told me that the people of India are divided into two-and-seventy castes, and I marveled at this with exceeding marvel. Amongst other things that I saw in King Mihrján's dominions was an island called Kásil, wherein all night is heard the beating of drums and tabrets; but we were told by the neighboring islanders and by travelers that the inhabitants are people of diligence and judgment. In this sea I saw also a fish two hundred cubits long, and the fishermen fear it; so they strike together pieces of wood and put it to flight. I also saw another fish, with a head like that of an owl, besides many other wonders and rarities, which it would be tedious to recount. I occupied myself thus in visiting the islands, till one day, as I stood in the port, with a staff in my hand, according to my custom, behold, a great ship, wherein were many merchants, came sailing for the harbor. When it reached the small inner port where ships anchor under the city, the master furled his sails and making fast to the shore, put out the landing-planks, whereupon the crew fell to breaking bulk and landing cargo whilst I stood by, taking written note of them. They were long in bringing the goods ashore, so I asked the master, «Is there aught left in thy ship?» and he answered, «O my lord, there are divers bales of merchandise in the hold, whose owner was drowned from amongst us at one of the islands on our course; so his goods remained in our charge by way of trust, and we propose to sell them and note their price, that we may convey it to his people in the city of Baghdad, the Home of Peace.» «What was the merchant's name?» quoth I, and quoth he, «Sindbad the Seaman»; whereupon I straitly considered him and knowing him, cried out to him with a great cry, saying, «O captain, I am that Sindbad the Seaman who traveled with other merchants; and when the fish heaved and thou calledst to us, some saved themselves and others sank, I being one of them. But Allah Almighty threw in my way a great tub of wood, of those the crew had used to wash withal, and the winds and waves carried me to this island, where by Allah's grace I fell in with King Mihrján's grooms and they brought me hither to the King their master. When I told him my story he entreated me with favor and made me his harbor-master, and I have prospered in his service and found acceptance with him. These bales, therefore, are mine, the goods which God hath given me—"

And Shahrazad perceived the dawn of day and ceased to say her permitted say.

Now when it was the Five Hundred and Forty-second Night,

She continued, It hath reached me, O auspicious King, that when Sindbad the Seaman said to the captain, "These bales are mine, the goods which Allah hath given me," the other exclaimed, "There is no Majesty and there is no Might save in Allah, the Glorious, the Great! Verily, there is neither conscience nor good faith left among men!" Said I, "O Rais, what mean these words, seeing that I have told thee my case?" And he answered, "Because thou heardest me say that I had with me goods whose owner was drowned, thou thinkest to take them without right; but this is forbidden by law to thee, for we saw him drown before our eyes, together with many other passengers, nor was one of them saved. So how canst thou pretend that thou art the owner of the goods?" "O captain," said I, "listen to my story and give heed to my words, and my truth will be manifest to thee; for lying and leasing are the letter-marks of the hypocrites." Then I recounted to him all that had befallen me since I sailed from Baghdad with him to the time when we came to the fish-island where we were nearly drowned; and I reminded him of certain matters which had passed between us; whereupon both he and the merchants were certified of the truth of my story and recognized me and gave me joy of my deliverance, saying, "By Allah, we thought not that thou hadst escaped drowning! But the Lord hath granted thee new life." Then they delivered my bales to me, and I found my name written thereon, nor was aught thereof lacking. So I opened them, and making up a present for King Mihrján of the finest and costliest of the contents, caused the sailors to carry it up to the palace, where I went in to the King and laid my present at his feet acquainting him with what had happened, especially concerning the ship and my goods; whereat he wondered with exceeding wonder and the truth of all that I had told him was made manifest to him. His affection for me redoubled after that, and he showed me exceeding honor and bestowed on me a great present in return for mine. Then I sold my bales and what other matters I owned, making a great profit on them, and bought me other goods and gear of the growth and fashion of the island-city. When the merchants were about to start on their homeward voyage, I embarked on board the ship all that I possessed, and going in to the King, thanked him for all his favors and friendship, and craved his leave to return to my own land and friends. He farewelled me and bestowed upon me great store of the country-stuffs and produce; and I took leave of him and embarked. Then we set sail and fared on nights and days, by the permission of Allah Almighty; and Fortune served us and Fate favored us, so that we arrived in safety at Bassorah-city where I landed rejoiced at my safe return to my natal soil. After a short stay, I set out for Baghdad, the House of Peace, with store of goods and commodities of great price. Reaching the city in due time, I went straight to my own quarter and entered my house, where all my friends and kinsfolk came to greet me. Then I bought me eunuchs and concubines, servants and negro slaves, till I had a large establishment, and I bought me houses, and lands and gardens, till I was richer and in better case than before, and returned to enjoy the society of my friends and familiars more assiduously than ever, forgetting all I had suffered of fatigue and hardship and strangerhood and every peril of travel; and I applied myself to all manner joys and solaces and delights, eating the daintiest viands and drinking the deliciousest wines; and my wealth allowed this state of things to endure. This, then, is the story of my first voyage, and to-morrow, Inshallah! I will tell you the tale of the second of my seven voyages. Saith he who telleth the tale: Then Sindbad the Seaman made Sindbad the Landsman sup with him and bade give him an hundred gold pieces, saying, "Thou hast cheered us with thy company this day." The Porter thanked him, and taking the gift, went his way, pondering that which he had heard and marveling mightily at what things betide mankind.

CONCLUSION OF THE 'THOUSAND NIGHTS AND A NIGHT'

Translation of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton

Now during this time Shahrazad had borne the King three boy children; so, when she had made an end of the story of Ma'aruf, she rose to her feet and kissing ground before him, said, "O King of the time and unique one of the age and the tide, I am thine handmaid, and these thousand nights and a night have I entertained thee with stories of folk gone before and admonitory instances of the men of yore. May I then make bold to crave a boon of thy highness?" He replied, "Ask, O Shahrazad, and it shall be granted to thee." Whereupon she cried out to the nurses and the eunuchs, saying, "Bring me my children." So they brought them to her in haste, and they were three boy children, one walking, one crawling, and one sucking. She took them, and setting them before the King, again kissed ground and said, "O King of the Age, these are thy children and I crave that thou release me from the doom of death, as a dole to these infants; for, an thou kill me, they will become motherless and will find none among women to rear them as they should be reared." When the King heard this, he wept and straining the boys to his bosom, said, "By Allah, O Shahrazad, I pardoned thee before the coming of these children, for that I found thee chaste, pure, ingenuous, and pious! Allah bless thee and thy father and thy mother and thy root and thy branch! I take the Almighty to witness against me that I exempt thee from aught that can harm thee."

So she kissed his hands and feet and rejoiced with exceeding joy, saying, "The Lord make thy life long and increase thee in dignity and majesty!" presently adding, "Thou marveledst at which befell thee on the part of women; yet there betided the Kings of the Chosroës before thee greater mishaps and more grievous than that which hath befallen thee, and indeed I have set forth unto thee that which happened to Caliphs and Kings and others with their women, but the relation is longsome, and hearkening groweth tedious, and in this is all-sufficient warning for the man of wits and admonishment for the wise." Then she ceased to speak, and when King Shahryar heard her speech and profited by that which she had said, he summoned up his reasoning powers and cleansed his heart and caused his understanding to revert, and turned to Allah Almighty and said to himself, « Since there befell the Kings of the Chosroës more than that which hath befallen me, never whilst I live shall I cease to blame myself for the past. As for this Shahrazad, her like is not found in the lands; so praise be to Him Who appointed her a means for delivering His creatures from oppression and slaughter! » Then he arose from his séance and kissed her head, whereat she rejoiced, she and her sister Dunyazad, with exceeding joy.

When the morning morrowed the King went forth, and sitting down on the throne of the Kingship, summoned the Lords of his land; whereupon the Chamberlains and Nabobs and Captains of the host went in to him and kissed ground before him. He distinguished the Wazir, Shahrazad's sire, with special favor and bestowed on him a costly and splendid robe of honor, and entreated him with the utmost kindness, and said to him, « Allah protect thee for that thou gavest me to wife thy noble daughter, who hath been the means of my repentance from slaying the daughters of folk. Indeed, I have found her pure and pious, chaste and ingenuous, and Allah hath vouchsafed me by her three boy children; wherefore praised be He for His passing favor. » Then he bestowed robes of honor upon his Wazirs and Emirs and Chief Officers and he set forth to them briefly that which had betided him with Shahrazad, and how he had turned from his former ways and repented him of what he had done, and proposed to take the Wazir's daughter Shahrazad to wife, and let draw up the marriage-contract with her. When those who were present heard this, they kissed ground before him and blessed him and his betrothed Shahrazad, and the Wazir thanked her.

Then Shahryar made an end of his sitting in all weal, whereupon the folk dispersed to their dwelling-places, and the news was bruited abroad that the King proposed to marry the Wazir's daughter, Shahrazad. Then he proceeded to make ready the wedding gear, and presently he sent after his brother, King Shah Zaman, who came, and King Shahryar went forth to meet him with the troops. Furthermore, they decorated the city after the goodliest fashion and diffused scents from censers and burnt aloes-wood and other perfumes in all the markets and thoroughfares and rubbed themselves with saffron, what while the drums beat and the flutes and pipes sounded and mimes and mountebanks played and plied their arts, and the King lavished on them gifts and largesse, and in very deed it was a notable day. When they came to the palace, King Shahryar commanded to spread the table with beasts roasted whole, and sweetmeats, and all manner of viands, and bade the crier cry to the folk that they should come up to the Diwan and eat and drink, and that this should be a means of reconciliation between him and them. So high and low, great and small, came up unto him, and they abode on that wise, eating and drinking, seven days with their nights.

Then the King shut himself up with his brother, and related to him that which had betided him with the Wazir's daughter Shahrazad during the past three years, and told him what he had heard from her of proverbs and parables, chronicles and pleasantries, quips and jests, stories and anecdotes, dialogues and histories, and elegies and other verses; whereat King Shah Zaman marveled with the utmost marvel and said, “Fain would I take her younger sister to wife, so we may be two brothers-german to two sisters-german, and they on like wise be sisters to us; for that the calamity which befell me was the cause of our discovering that which befell thee, and all this time of three years past I have taken no delight in woman; but now I desire to marry thy wife's sister Dunyazad.”

When King Shahryar heard his brother's words, he rejoiced with joy exceeding, and arising forthright, went in to his wife Shahrazad and acquainted her with that which his brother purposed, namely, that he sought her sister Dunyazad in wedlock; whereupon she answered, “O King of the Age, we seek of him one condition, to wit, that he take up his abode with us, for that I cannot brook to be parted from my sister an hour, because we were brought up together, and may not endure separation each from another. If he accept this pact, she is his handmaid.” King Shahryar returned to his brother and acquainted him with that which Shahrazad had said; and he replied, “Indeed, this is what was in my mind, for that I desire nevermore to be parted from thee one hour. As for the kingdom, Allah the Most High shall send to it whomso He chooseth, for that I have no longer a desire for the kingship.”

When King Shahryar heard his brother's words, he rejoiced exceedingly and said, “Verily, this is what I wished, O my brother. So Alhamdolillah — Praised be Allah! — who hath brought about union between us.” Then he sent after the Kazis and Olema, Captains and Notables, and they married the two brothers to the two sisters. The contracts were written out, and the two Kings bestowed robes of honor of silk and satin on those who were present, whilst the city was decorated and the rejoicings were renewed. The King commanded each Emir and Wazir and Chamberlain and Nabob to decorate his palace, and the folk of the city were gladdened by the presage of happiness and contentment. King Shahryar also bade slaughter sheep, and set up kitchens and made bride-feasts and fed all comers, high and low; and he gave alms to the poor and needy and extended his bounty to great and small.

Then the eunuchs went forth that they might perfume the Hammam for the brides; so they scented it with rosewater and willow-flower water and pods of musk, and fumigated it with Kákilí eaglewood and ambergris. Then Shahrazad entered, she and her sister Dunyazad, and they cleansed their heads and clipped their hair. When they came forth of the Hammam-bath, they donned raiment and ornaments, such as men were wont prepare for the Kings of the Chosroës; and among Shahrazad's apparel was a dress purfled with red gold and wrought with counterfeit presentments of birds and beasts. And the two sisters encircled their necks with necklaces of jewels of price, in the like whereof Iskander rejoiced not, for therein were great jewels such as amazed the wit and dazzled the eye; and the imagination was bewildered at their charms, for indeed each of them was brighter than the sun and the moon. Before them they lighted brilliant flambeaux of wax in candelabra of gold, but their faces outshone the flambeaux, for that they had eyes sharper than unsheathed swords and the lashes of their eyelids bewitched all hearts. Their cheeks were rosy red, and their necks and shapes gracefully swayed, and their eyes wantoned like the gazelle's; and the slave-girls came to meet them with instruments of music.

Then the two Kings entered the Hammam-bath, and when they came forth they sat down on a couch set with pearls and gems, whereupon the two sisters came up to them and stood between their hands, as they were moons, bending and leaning from side to side in their beauty and loveliness. Presently they brought forward Shahrazad and displayed her, for the first dress, in a red suit; whereupon King Shahryar rose to look upon her, and the wits of all present, men and women, were bewitched for that she was even as saith of her one of her describers:—

A sun on wand in knoll of sand she showed, * Clad in her
cramoisy-hued chemisette:
Of her lips' honey-dew she gave me drink * And with her rosy
cheeks quencht fire she set.

Then they attired Dunyazad in a dress of blue brocade, and she became as she were the full moon when it shineth forth. So they displayed her in this, for the first dress, before King Shah Zaman, who rejoiced in her and well-nigh swooned away for love-longing and amorous desire; yea, he was distraught with passion for her, whenas he saw her, because she was as saith of her one of her describers in these couplets:—

She comes appareled in an azure vest * Ultramarine as skies
are deckt and dight:
I view'd th' unparall'd sight, which showed my eyes * A
Summer-moon upon a Winter-night.

Then they returned to Shahrazad and displayed her in the second dress, a suit of surpassing goodliness, and veiled her face with her hair like a chin-veil. Moreover, they let down her side-locks, and she was even as saith of her one of her describers in these couplets:—

O hail to him whose locks his cheeks o'ershade, * Who slew
my life by cruel hard despight:
Said I, «Hast veiled the Morn in Night?» He said, * «Nay, I
but veil the Moon in hue of Night.»

Then they displayed Dunyazad in a second and a third and a fourth dress, and she paced forward like the rising sun, and swayed to and fro in the insolence of her beauty; and she was even as saith the poet of her in these couplets:—

The sun of beauty she to all appears * And, lovely coy, she
mocks all loveliness:
And when he fronts her favor and her smile * A-morn, the
sun of day in clouds must dress.

Then they displayed Shahrazad in the third dress and the fourth and the fifth, and she became as she were a Bán-branch snell of a thirsting gazelle, lovely of face and perfect in attributes of grace, even as saith of her one in these couplets:—

She comes like fullest moon on happy night, * Taper of waist
with shape of magic might;
She hath an eye whose glances quell mankind, * And ruby on
her cheeks reflects his light;
Enveils her hips the blackness of her hair; * Beware of curls
that bite with viper-bite!
Her sides are silken-soft, what while the heart * Mere rock
behind that surface 'scapes our sight;
From the fringed curtains of her eyne she shoots * Shafts that
at furthest range on mark alight.

Then they returned to Dunyazad and displayed her in the fifth dress and in the sixth, which was green, when she surpassed with her loveliness the fair of the four quarters of the world, and outvied, with the brightness of her countenance, the full moon at rising tide; for she was even as saith of her the poet in these couplets: —

A damsel 'twas the tirer's art had decked with snare and sleight,
* And robed with rays as though the sun from her had borrowed
light;
She came before us wondrous clad in chemisette of green, * As
veilèd by his leafy screen Pomegranate hides from sight;
And when he said, « How callest thou the fashion of thy dress? »
* She answered us in pleasant way, with double meaning dight,
« We call this garment *crève-cœur;* and rightly is it hight, * For
many a heart wi' this we brake and harried many a sprite. »

Then they displayed Shahrazad in the sixth and seventh dresses and clad her in youth's clothing, whereupon she came forward swaying from side to side, and coquettishly moving, and indeed she ravished wits and hearts and ensorcelled all eyes with her glances. She shook her sides and swayed her haunches, then put her hair on sword-hilt and went up to King Shahryar, who embraced her as hospitable host embraceth guest, and threatened her in her ear with the taking of the sword; and she was even as saith of her the poet in these words: —

Were not the Murk of gender male, * Than feminines surpassing fair,
Tire-women they had grudged the bride, * Who made her beard
and whiskers wear!

Thus also they did with her sister Dunyazad; and when they had made an end of the display, the King bestowed robes of honor on all who were present, and sent the brides to their own apartments. Then Shahrazad went in to King Shahryar and Dunyazad to King Shah Zaman, and each of them solaced himself with the company of his beloved consort, and the hearts of the folk were comforted. When morning morrowed, the Wazir came in to the two Kings and kissed ground before them; wherefore they thanked him and were large of bounty to him. Presently they went forth and sat down upon couches of kingship, whilst all the Wazirs and Emirs and Grandees and Lords of the land presented themselves and kissed ground. King Shahryar ordered them dresses of honor and largesse, and they prayed for the permanence and prosperity of the King and his brother. Then the two Sovrans appointed their sire-in-law the Wazir to be Viceroy in Samarcand, and assigned him five of the Chief Emirs to accompany him, charging them attend him and do him service. The Minister kissed ground and prayed that they might be vouchsafed length of life: then he went in to his daughters, whilst the Eunuchs and Ushers walked before him, and saluted them and farewelled them. They kissed his hands and gave him joy of the kingship and bestowed on him immense treasures; after which he took leave of them, and setting out, fared days and nights, till he came near Samarcand, where the townspeople met him at a distance of three marches and rejoiced in him with exceeding joy. So he entered the city, and they decorated the houses and it was a notable day. He sat down on the throne of his kingship, and the Wazirs did him homage and the Grandees and Emirs of Samarcand, and all prayed that he might be vouchsafed justice and victory and length of continuance. So he bestowed on them robes of honor and entreated them with distinction, and they made him Sultan over them. As soon as his father-in-law had departed for Samarcand, King Shahryar summoned the Grandees of his realm and made them a stupendous banquet of all manner of delicious meats and exquisite sweetmeats. He also bestowed on them robes of honor and guerdoned them, and divided the kingdoms between himself and his brother in their presence, whereat the folk rejoiced. Then the two Kings abode, each ruling a day in turn, and they were ever in harmony each with other, while on similar wise their wives continued in the love of Allah Almighty and in thanksgiving to Him; and the peoples and the provinces were at peace, and the preachers prayed for them from the pulpits, and their report was bruited abroad and the travelers bore tidings of them to all lands. In due time King Shahryar summoned chronicles and copyists, and bade them write all that had betided him with his wife, first and last; so they wrote this and named it 'The Stories of the Thousand Nights and A Night.' The book came to thirty volumes, and these the King laid up in his treasure. And the two brothers abode with their wives in all pleasaunce and solace of life and its delights, for that indeed Allah the Most High had changed their annoy into joy; and on this wise they continued till there took them the Destroyer of delights and the Severer of societies, the Desolator of dwelling-places, and Garnerer of grave-yards, and they were translated to the ruth of Almighty Allah; their houses fell waste and their palaces lay in ruins, and the Kings inherited their riches. Then there reigned after them a wise ruler, who was just, keen-witted, and accomplished, and loved tales and legends, especially those which chronicle the doings of Sovrans and Sultans, and he found in the treasury these marvelous stories and wondrous histories, contained in the thirty volumes aforesaid. So he read in them a first book and a second and a third and so on to the last of them, and each book astounded and delighted him more than that which preceded it, till he came to the end of them. Then he admired what so he had read therein of description and discourse and rare traits and anecdotes and moral instances and reminiscences, and bade the folk copy them and dispread them over all lands and climes; wherefore their report was bruited abroad and the people named them 'The marvels and wonders of the Thousand Nights and A Night.' This is all that hath come down to us of the origin of this book, and Allah is All-knowing. So Glory be to Him Whom the shifts of Time waste not away, nor doth aught of chance or change affect His sway! Whom one case diverteth not from other case, and Who is sole in the attributes of perfect grace. And prayer and the Peace be upon the Lord's Pontiff and Chosen One among His creatures, our Lord MOHAMMED the Prince of mankind, through whom we supplicate Him for a goodly and a godly end.

ARABIC LITERATURE

BY RICHARD GOTTHEIL

Of no civilization is the complexion of its literary remains so characteristic of its varying fortunes as is that of the Arabic. The precarious conditions of desert life and of the tent, the more certain existence in settled habitations, the grandeur of empire acquired in a short period of enthusiastic rapture, the softening influence of luxury and unwonted riches, are so faithfully portrayed in the literature of the Arabs as to give us a picture of the spiritual life of the people which no mere massing of facts can ever give. Well aware of this themselves, the Arabs at an early date commenced the collection and preservation of their old literary monuments with a care and a studious concern which must excite within us a feeling of wonder. For the material side of life must have made a strong appeal to these people when they came forth from their desert homes. Pride in their own doings, pride in their own past, must have spurred them on; yet an ardent feeling for the beautiful in speech is evident from the beginning of their history. The first knowledge that we have of the tribes scattered up and down the deserts and oases of the Arabian peninsula comes to us in the verses of their poets. The early Teuton bards, the rhapsodists of Greece, were not listened to with more rapt attention than was the simple Bedouin, who, seated on his mat or at the door of his tent, gave vent to his feelings of joy or sorrow in such manner as nature had gifted him. As are the ballads for Scottish history, so are the verses of these untutored bards the record of the life in which they played no mean part. Nor could the splendors of court life at Damascus, Bagdad, or Cordova make their rulers insensible to the charms of poetry, — that «beautiful poetry with which Allah has adorned the Muslim.» A verse happily said could always charm, a satire well pointed could always incite; and the true Arab of to-day will listen to those so adorned with the same rapt attention as did his fathers of long ago.

This gift of the desert — otherwise so sparing of its favors — has not failed to leave its impression upon the whole Arabic literature. Though it has produced some prose writers of value, writing, as an art to charm and to please, has always sought the measured cadence of poetry or the unmeasured symmetry of rhymed prose. Its first lispings are in the «trembling» (rájaz) metre, — iambics, rhyming in the same syllable throughout; impromptu verses, in which the poet expressed the feelings of the moment: a measure which, the Arabs say, matches the trembling trot of the she-camel. It is simple in its character; coming so near to rhymed prose that Khalíl (born 718), the great grammarian, would not willingly admit that such lines could really be called poetry. Some of these verses go back to the fourth and fifth centuries of our era. But a growing sense of the poet's art was incompatible with so simple a measure; and a hundred years before the appearance of the Prophet, many of the canonical sixteen metres were already in vogue. Even the later complete poems bear the stamp of their origin, in the loose connection with which the different parts stand to each other. The «Kasídah» (poem) is built upon the principle that each verse must be complete in itself, — there being no stanzas, — and separable from the context; which has made interpolations and omissions in the older poems a matter of ease.

The classical period of Arabic poetry, which reaches from the beginning of the sixth century to the beginning of the eighth, is dominated by this form of the Kasídah. Tradition refers its origin to one al-Muhalhel ibn Rabí'a of the tribe of Taghlib, about one hundred and fifty years before Muhammad; though, as is usual, this honor is not uncontested. The Kasídah is composed of distichs, the first two of which only are to rhyme; though every line must end in the same syllable. It must have at least seven or ten verses, and may reach up to one hundred or over. In nearly every case it deals with a tribe or a single person, — the poet himself or a friend, — and may be either a panegyric, a satire, an elegy, or a eulogy. That which it is the aim of the poet to bring out comes last; the greater part of the poem being of the nature of a *captatio benevolentia*. Here he can show his full power of expression. He usually commences with the description of a deserted camping-ground, where he sees the traces of his beloved. He then adds the erotic part, and describes at length his deeds of valor in the chase or in war; in order, then, to lead over to the real object he has in view. Because of this disposition of the material, which is used by the greater poets of this time. the general form of the Kasídah became in a measure stereotyped. No poem was considered perfect unless molded in this form.

Arabic poetry is thus entirely lyrical. There was too little, among these tribes, of the common national life which forms the basis for the Epos. The Semitic genius is too subjective, and has never gotten beyond the first rude attempts at dramatic composition. Even in its lyrics, Arabic poetry is still more subjective than the Hebrew of the Bible. It falls generally into the form of an allocution, even where it is descriptive. It is the poet who speaks, and his personality pervades the whole poem. He describes nature as he finds it, with little of the imaginative, «in dim grand outlines of a picture which must be filled up by the reader, guided only by a few glorious touches powerfully standing out.» A native quickness of apprehension and intense feeling nurtured this poetic sentiment among the Arabs. The continuous enmity among the various tribes produced a sort of knight-errantry which gave material to the poet; and the richness of his language put a tongue in his mouth which could voice forth the finest shades of description or sentiment. Al-Damári has wisely said: «Wisdom has alighted upon three things,—the brain of the Franks, the hands of the Chinese, and the tongues of the Arabs.»

The horizon which bounded the Arab poet's view was not far drawn out. He describes the scenes of his desert life: the sand dunes; the camel, antelope, wild ass, and gazelle; his bow and arrow and his sword; his loved one torn from him by the sudden striking of the tents and departure of her tribe. The virtues which he sings are those in which he glories, «love of freedom, independence in thought and action, truthfulness, largeness of heart, generosity, and hospitality.» His descriptions breathe the freshness of his outdoor life and bring us close to nature; his whole tone rings out a solemn note, which is even in his lighter moments grave and serious,—as existence itself was for those sons of the desert, who had no settled habitation, and who, more than any one, depended upon the bounty of Allah. Although these Kasídahs passed rapidly from mouth to mouth, little would have been preserved for us had there not been a class of men who, led on some by desire, some by necessity, made it their business to write down the compositions, and to keep fresh in their memory the very pronunciation of each word. Every poet had such a Ráwiah. Of one Hammád it is said that he could recite one hundred Kasídahs rhyming on each letter of the alphabet, each Kasídah having at least one hundred verses. Abu Tammám (805), the author of the 'Hamásah,' is reported to have known by heart fourteen thousand pieces of the metre rájaz. It was not, however, until the end of the first century of the Híjrah that systematic collections of this older literature were commenced.

It was this very Hammád (died 777) who put together seven of the choicest poems of the early Arabs. He called them 'Mu 'allakât,'—«the hung up» (in a place of honor, in the estimation of the people). The authors of these seven poems were: Imr-al-Kais, Tárafa, Zuhéir, Labîd (570), 'Antara, 'Amr, and al-Hárith. The common verdict of their countrymen has praised the choice made by Hammád. The seven remained the great models, to which later poets aspired: in description of love, those of Imr-al-Kais and 'Antara; in that of the camel and the horse, Labîd; of battle, 'Amr; in the praise of arms, Hárith; in wise maxims, Zuhéir. To these must be added al-Nabighah, 'Alkamah, Urwa ibn al-Ward, Hássan ibn Thábit, al-A'sha, Aus ibn Hájar, and as-Shánfarah, whose poem has been called «the most magnificent of old Arabic poems.» In addition to the single poems found in the ‘Mu ’allakât’ and elsewhere, nearly all of these composed whole series of poems, which were at a later time put in the form of collections and called ‘Diwans.’ Some of these poets have left us as many as four hundred verses. Such collections were made by grammarians and antiquarians of a later age. In addition to the collections made around the name of a single poet, others were made, fashioned upon a different principle: The ‘Mufáddaliyát’ (the most excellent poems), put together by al-Mufáddal (761); the ‘Diwan’ of the poets of the tribe of Hudhéil; the ‘Hamásah’ (Bravery; so called from the subject of the first of the ten books into which the collection is divided) of Abu Tammám. The best anthology of these poems is ‘The Great Book of Songs,’ put together by Abu al-Fáraj al-Ispaháni (died 967).

With these poets Arabic literature reached its highest development. They are the true expression of the free Arabic spirit. Most of them lived before or during the time of the appearance of Muhammad. His coming produced a great change in the life of the simple Bedouins. Though they could not be called heathen, their religion expressed itself in the simple feeling of dependence upon higher powers, without attempting to bring this faith into a close connection with their daily life. Muhammad introduced a system into which he tried to mold all things. He wished to unite the scattered tribes to one only purpose. He was thus cutting away that untrammeled spirit and that free life which had been the making of Arabic poetry. He knew this well. He knew also the power the poets had over the people. His own ‘Qur’an’ (Koran) was but a poor substitute for the elegant verses of his opponents. «Imr-al-Kais,» he said, «is the finest of all poets, and their leader into everlasting fire.» On another occasion he is reported to have called out, «Verily, a belly full of matter is better than a belly full of poetry.» Even when citing verses, he quoted them in such a manner as to destroy the metre. Abu Bekr very properly remarked, «Truly God said in the ‘Qur’an,’ ‘We have not taught him poetry, and it suits him not.’» In thus decrying the poets of «barbarism,» and in setting up the ‘Qur’an’ as the greatest production of Arabic genius, Muhammad was turning the national poetry to its decline. Happily his immediate successors were unable or unwilling to follow him strictly. Ali himself, his son-in-law, is said to have been a poet; nor did the Umáyyid Caliphs of Damascus, «very heathens in their carnal part,» bring the new spirit to its full bloom, as did the Abbassides of Bagdad.

And yet the old spirit was gradually losing ground. The consolidation of the empire brought greater security; the riches of Persia and Syria produced new types of men. The centre of Arab life was now in the city, with all its trammels, its forced politeness, its herding together. The simplicity which characterized the early caliphs was going; in its place was come a court, — court life, court manners, court poets. The love of poetry was still there; but the poet of the tent had become the poet of the house and the palace. Like those troubadours who had become jongleurs, they lived upon the crumbs which fell from the table of princes. Such crumbs were often not to be despised. Many a time and oft the bard tuned his lyre merely for the price of his services. We know that he was richly rewarded. Harún gave a dress worth four hundred thousand pieces of gold to Já'far ibn Yahya; at his death, Ibn 'Ubeid al-Buchtarí (865) left one hundred complete suits of dress, two hundred shirts, and five hundred turbans — all of which had been given him for his poems. The freshness of olden times was fading little by little; the earnestness of the Bedouin poet was making way for a lightness of heart. In this intermediate period, few were born so happily, and yet so imbued with the new spirit, as was 'Umar ibn 'Rabí'a (644), «the man of pleasure as well as the man of literature.» Of rich parentage, gifted with a love of song which moved him to speak in verses, he was able to keep himself far from both prince and palace. He was of the family of Kureísh, in whose Muhammad all the glories of Arabia had centred, with one exception, — the gift of poetry. And now «this Don Juan of Mecca, this Ovid of Arabia,» was to wipe away that stain. He was the Arabian Minnesinger, whom Friedrich Rückert called «the greatest love-poet the Arabs have produced.» A man of the city, the desert had no attractions for him. But he sang of love as he made love, — with utter disregard of holy place or high station, in an erotic strain strange to the stern Umáyyids. No wonder they warned their children against reading his compositions. «The greatest sin committed against Allah are the poems of 'Umar ibn Rabí'a,» they said.

With the rise of the Abbassides (750), that «God-favored dynasty,» Arabic literature entered upon its second great development; a development which may be distinguished from that of the Umáyyids (which was Arabian) as, in very truth, Muhammadan. With Bagdad as the capital, it was rather the non-Arabic Persians who held aloft the torch than the Arabs descended from Kuréish. It was a bold move, this attempt to weld the old Persian civilization with the new Muhammadan. Yet so great was the power of the new faith that it succeeded. The Barmecide major-domo ably seconded his Abbasside master; the glory of both rests upon the interest they took in art, literature, and science. The Arab came in contact with a new world. Under Mansúr (754), Harun al-Rashid (786), and Ma'mún

(813), the wisdom of the Greeks in philosophy and science, the charms of Persia and India in wit and satire, were opened up to enlightened eyes. Upon all of these, whatever their nationality, Islam had imposed the Arab tongue, pride in the faith and in its early history. ‹Qur'an› exegesis, philosophy, law, history, and science were cultivated under the very eyes and at the bidding of the Palace. And, at least for several centuries, Europe was indebted to the culture of Bagdad for what it knew of mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy.

The Arab muse profited with the rest of this revival. History and philosophy, as a study, demanded a close acquaintance with the products of early Arab genius. The great philologian al-Asmái (740–831) collected the songs and tales of the heroic age; and a little later, with other than philological ends in view, Abu Tammán and al-Búchturí (816–913) made the first anthologies of the old Arabic literatures (‹Hamásah›). Poetry was already cultivated: and amid the hundreds of wits, poets, and singers who thronged the entrance to the court, there are many who claim real poetic genius. Among them are al-Ahtal (died 713), a Christian; 'Umar ibn Rabí'a (died 728), Jarír al-Farázdak (died 728), and Muslim ibn al-Walíd (died 828). But it is rather the Persian spirit which rules,—the spirit of the Shahnámeh and Firdaúsi,—«charming elegance, servile court flattery, and graceful wit.» In none are the characteristics so manifest as in Abu Núwas (762–819), the Poet Laureate of Harun, the Imr-al-Kais of his time. His themes are wine and love. Everything else he casts to the wind; and like his modern counterpart, Heine, he drives the wit of his satire deep into the holiest feelings of his people. «I would that all which Religion and Law forbids were permitted me; and if I had only two years to live, that God would change me into a dog at the Temple in Mecca, so that I might bite every pilgrim in the leg,» he is reported to have said. When he himself did once make the required pilgrimage, he did so in order to carry his loves up to the very walls of the sacred house. «Jovial, adventure-loving, devil-may-care,» irreligious in all he did, yet neither the Khalif nor the whole Muhammadan world were incensed. In spite of all, they petted him and pronounced his wine-songs the finest ever written; full of thought and replete with pictures, rich in language and true to every touch of nature. «There are no poems on wine equal to my own, and to my amatory compositions all others must yield,» he himself has said. He was poor and had to live by his talents. But wherever he went he was richly rewarded. He was content only to be able to live in shameless revelry and to sing. As he lived, so he died,—in a half-drunken group, cut to pieces by those who thought themselves offended by his lampoons.

At the other end of the Muslim world, the star of the Umáyyids, which had set at Damascus, rose again at Cordova. The union of two civilizations — Indo-Germanic and Semitic — was as advantageous in the West as in the East. The influence of the spirit of learning which reigned at Bagdad reached over to Spain, and the two dynasties vied with each other in the patronage of all that was beautiful in literature and learned in science. Poetry was cultivated and poets cherished with a like regard: the Spanish innate love of the Muse joined hands with that of the Arabic. It was the same kind of poetry in Umáyyid Spain as in Abbasside Bagdad: poetry of the city and of the palace. But another element was added here,— the Western love for the softer beauties of nature, and for their expression in finely worked out mosaics and in graceful descriptions. It is this that brings the Spanish-Arabic poetry nearer to us than the more splendid and glittering verses of the Abbassides, or the cruder and less polished lines of the first Muhammadans. The amount of poetry thus composed in Arab Spain may be gauged by the fact that an anthology made during the first half of the tenth century, by Ibn Fáraj, contained twenty thousand verses. Cordova under 'Abd-al-Rahmán III. and Hákim II. was the counterpart of Bagdad under Harun. «The most learned prince that ever lived,» Hákim was so renowned a patron of literature that learned men wandered to him from all over the Arab Empire. He collected a library of four hundred thousand volumes, which had been gathered together by his agents in Egypt, Syria, and Persia: the catalogue of which filled forty-four volumes. In Cordova he founded a university and twenty-seven free schools. What wonder that all the sciences — Tradition, Theology, Jurisprudence, and especially History and Geography — flourished during his reign. Of the poets of this period there may be mentioned: Sa'íd ibn Júdi — the pattern of the Knight of those days, the poet loved of women; Yáhyah ibn Hakam, «the gazelle»; Ahmad ibn 'Abd Rabbíh, the author of a commonplace book; Ibn Abdún of Badjiz, Ibn Hafájah of Xucar, Ibn Sa'íd of Granada. Kings added a new jewel to their crown, and took an honored place among the bards; as 'Abd al-Rahmán I., and Mu'tamid (died 1095), the last King of Seville, whose unfortunate life he himself has pictured in most beautiful elegies. Although the short revival under the Almohades (1184–1198) produced such men as Ibn Roshd, the commentator on Aristotle, and Ibn Toféil, who wrote the first 'Robinson Crusoe' story, the sun was already setting. When Ferdinand burned the books which had been so laboriously collected, the dying flame of Arab culture in Spain went out.

During the third period — from Ma'mún (813), under whom the Turkish body-guards began to wield their baneful influence, until the break-up of the Abbasside Empire in 1258 — there are many names, but few real poets, to be mentioned. The Arab spirit had spent itself, and the Mogul cloud was on the horizon. There were 'Abd-allah ibn al-Mu'tazz, died 908; Abu Firás, died 967; al-Tughrai, died 1120; al-Busíri, died 1279,—author of the 'Búrda,' poem in praise of Muhammad: but al-Mutanábbi, died 965, alone deserves special mention. The «Prophet-pretender»—for such his name signifies—has been called by Von Hammer «the greatest Arabian poet»; and there is no doubt that his 'Diwán,' with its two hundred and eighty-nine poems, was and is widely read in the East. But it is only a depraved taste that can prefer such an epigene to the fresh desert-music of Imr-al-Kais. Panegyrics, songs of war and of bloodshed, are mostly the themes that he dilates upon. He was in the service of Saif al-Dáulah of Syria, and sang his victories over the Byzantine Kaiser. He is the true type of the prince's poet. Withal, the taste for poetic composition grew, though it produced a smaller number of great poets. But it also usurped for itself fields which belong to entirely different literary forms. Grammar, lexicography, philosophy, and theology were expounded in verse; but the verse was formal, stiff, and unnatural. Poetic composition became a *tour de force*.

This is nowhere better seen than in that species of composition which appeared for the first time in the eleventh century, and which so pleased and charmed a degenerate age as to make of the 'Makamat' the most favorite reading. Ahmad Abu Fadl al-Hamadhání, «the wonder of all time» (died 1007), composed the first of such «sessions.» Of his four hundred only a few have come down to our time. Abu Muhammad al-Hariri (1030–1121), of Bâsra, is certainly the one who made this species of literature popular; he has been closely imitated in Hebrew by Charízi (1218), and in Syriac by Ebed Yéshu (1290). «Makámah» means the place where one stands, where assemblies are held; then, the discourses delivered, or conversations held in such an assembly. The word is used here especially to denote a series of «discourses and conversations composed in a highly finished and ornamental style, and solely for the purpose of exhibiting various kinds of eloquence, and exemplifying the rules of grammar, rhetoric, and poetry.» Hariri himself speaks of—

«These 'Makamat,' which contain serious language and lightsome,
And combine refinement with dignity of style,
And brilliancies with jewels of eloquence,
And beauties of literature with its rarities,
Besides quotations from the 'Qur'an,' wherewith I adorned them,
And choice metaphors, and Arab proverbs that I interspersed,
And literary elegancies, and grammatical riddles,
And decisions upon ambiguous legal questions,
And original improvisations, and highly wrought orations,
And plaintive discourses, as well as jocose witticisms.»

The design is thus purely literary. The fifty «sessions» of Hariri, which are written in rhymed prose interspersed with poetry, contain oratorical, poetical, moral, encomiastic, and satirical discourses, which only the merest thread holds together. Each Makámah is a unit, and has no necessary connection with that which follows. The thread which so loosely binds them together is the delineation of the character of Abu Zeid, the hero, in his own words. He is one of those wandering minstrels and happy improvisers whom the favor of princes had turned into poetizing beggars. In each Makámah is related some ruse, by means of which Abu Zeid, because of his wonderful gift of speech, either persuades or forces those whom he meets to pay for his sustenance, and furnish the means for his debauches. Not the least of those thus ensnared is his great admirer, Háreth ibn Hammám, the narrator of the whole, who is none other than Hariri. Wearied at last with his life of travel, debauch, and deception, Abu Zeid retires to his native city and becomes an ascetic, thus to atone in a measure for his past sins. The whole might be called, not improperly, a tale, a novel. But the intention of the poet is to show forth the richness and variety of the Arabic language; and his own power over this great mass brings the descriptive—one might almost say the lexicographic—side too much to the front. A poem that can be read either backward or forward, or which contains all the words in the language beginning with a certain letter, may be a wonderful mosaic, but is nothing more. The merit of Hariri lies just in this: that working in such cramped quarters, with such intent and design continually guiding his pen, he has often really done more. He has produced rhymed prose and verses which are certainly elegant in diction and elevated in tone.

Such tales as these, told as an exercise of linguistic gymnastics, must not blind us to the presence of real tales, told for their own sake. Arabic literature has been very prolific in these. They lightened the graver subjects discussed in the tent,—philosophy, religion, and grammar,—and they furnished entertainment for the more boisterous assemblies in the coffee-houses and around the bowl. For the Arab is an inveterate story-teller; and in nearly all the prose that he writes, this character of the «teller» shimmers clearly through the work of the «writer.» He is an elegant narrator. Not only does he intersperse verses and lines more frequently than our own taste would license: by nature, he easily falls into the half-hearted poetry of rhymed prose, for which the rich assonances of his language predispose. His own learning was further cultivated by his early contact with Persian literature; through which the fable and the wisdom of India spoken from the mouths of dumb animals reached him. In this more frivolous form of inculcating wisdom, the Prophet scented danger to his strait-laced demands: «men who bring sportive legends, to lead astray from God's path without knowledge and to make a jest of it; for such is shameful woe,» is written in the thirty-first Surah. In vain; for in hours of relaxation, such works as the 'Fables of Bidpai' (translated from the Persian in 750 by 'Abd Allah ibn Mukáffah), the 'Ten Viziers,' the 'Seven Wise Masters,' etc., proved to be food too palatable. Nor were the Arabs wanting in their own peculiar 'Romances,' influenced only in some portions of the setting by Persian ideas. Such were the 'Story of Saif ibn dhi Yázan,' the 'Tale of al-Zir,' the 'Romance of Dálhmah,' and especially the 'Romance of Antar' and the 'Thousand Nights and A Night.' The last two romances are excellent commentaries on Arab life, at its dawn and at its fullness, among the roving chiefs of the desert and the homes of revelry in Bagdad. As the rough-hewn poetry of Imr-al-Kais and Zuhéir is a clearer exponent of the real Arab mind, roving at its own suggestion, than the more perfect and softer lines of a Mutanábbi, so is the 'Romance of Antar' the full expression of real Arab hero-worship. And even in the cities of the Orient to-day, the loungers in their cups can never weary of following the exploits of this black son of the desert, who in his person unites the great virtues of his people, magnanimity and bravery, with the gift of poetic speech. Its tone is elevated; its coarseness has as its origin the outspokenness of unvarnished man; it does not peep through the thin veneer of licentious suggestiveness. It is never trivial, even in its long and wearisome descriptions, in its ever-recurring outbursts of love. Its language suits its thought: choice and educated, and not descending—as in the 'Nights'—to the common expressions of ordinary speech. In this it resembles the 'Makamat' of Hariri, though much less artificial and more enjoyable. It is the Arabic romance of chivalry, and may not have been without influence on the spread of the romance of mediæval Europe. For though its central figure is a hero of pre-Islamic times, it was put together by the learned philologian, al-'Asmái, in the days of Harun the Just, at the time when Charlemagne was ruling in Europe.

There exist in Arabic literature very few romances of the length of 'Antar.' Though the Arab delights to hear and to recount tales, his tales are generally short and pithy. It is in this shorter form that he delights to inculcate principles of morality and norms of character. He is most adroit at repartee and at pungent replies. He has a way of stating principles which delights while it instructs. The anecdote is at home in the East: many a favor is gained, many a punishment averted, by a quick answer and a felicitously turned expression. Such anecdotes exist as popular traditions in very large numbers; and he receives much consideration whose mind is well stocked with them. Collections of anecdotes have been put to writing from time to time. Those dealing with the early history of the caliphate are among the best prose that the Arabs have produced. For pure prose was never greatly cultivated. The literature dealing with their own history, or with the geography and culture of the nations with which they came in contact, is very large, and as a record of facts is most important. Ibn Hishám (died 767), Wákidi (died 822), Tabari (838–923), Masudí (died 957), Ibn Athír (died 1233), Ibn Khaldún (died 1406), Makrísi (died 1442), Suyúti (died 1505), and Makkári (died 1631), are only a few of those who have given us large and comprehensive histories. Al-Birúni (died 1038), writer, mathematician, and traveler, has left us an account of the India of his day which has earned for him the title «Herodotus of India,» though for careful observation and faithful presentation he stands far above the writer with whose name he is adorned. But nearly all of these historical writers are mere chronologists, dry and wearisome to the general reader. It is only in the Preface, or ‹Exordium,› often the most elaborate part of the whole book viewed from a rhetorical standpoint, that they attempt to rise above mere incidents and strive after literary form. Besides the regard in which anecdotes are held, it is considered a mark of education to insert in one's speech as often as possible a familiar saying, a proverb, a *bon mot.* These are largely used in the moral addresses (Khútbah) made in the mosque or elsewhere, — addresses which take on also the form of rhymed prose. A famous collection of such sayings is attributed to 'Ali, the fourth successor of Muhammad. In these the whole power of the Arab for subtle distinctions in matters of wordly wisdom, and the truly religious feeling of the East, are clearly manifested.

The propensity of the Arab mind for the tale and the anecdote has had a wider influence in shaping the religious and legal development, of Muhammadanism than would appear at first sight. The ‹Qur'an› might well suffice as a directive code for a small body of men whose daily life was simple, and whose organization was of the crudest kind. But even Muhammad in his own later days was called on to supplement the written word by the spoken, to interpret such parts of his «book» as were unintelligible, to reconcile conflicting statements, and to fit the older legislation to changed circumstances. As the religious head of the community, his dictum became law; and these *logia* of the Prophet were handed around and handed down as the unwritten law by which his lieutenants were to be guided, in matters not only religious, but also legal. For «law» to them was part and parcel of «religion.» This «hadith» grew apace, until, in the third century of the Híjrah, it was put to writing. Nothing bears weight which has not the stamp of Muhammad's authority, as reported by his near surroundings and his friends. In such a mass of tradition, great care is taken to separate the chaff from the wheat. The chain of tradition (Isnád) must be given for each tradition, for each anecdote. But the «friends» of the Prophet are said to have numbered seven thousand five hundred, and it has not been easy to keep out fraud and deception. The subjects treated are most varied, sometimes even trivial, but dealing usually with recondite questions of law and morals. Three great collections of the ‹Hadíth› have been made: by al-Buchári (869), Múslim (874), and al-Tirmídhi (892). The first two only are considered canonical. From these are derived the three great systems of jurisprudence which to this day hold good in the Muhammadan world.

The best presentation of the characteristics of Arabic poetry is by W. Ahlwardt, ‹Ueber Poesie und Poetik der Araber› (Gotha, 1856); of Arabic metres, by G. W. Freytag, ‹Darstellung der Arabischen Verkunst› (Bonn, 1830). Translations of Arabic poetry have been published by J. D. Carlyle, ‹Specimens of Arabic Poetry› (Cambridge, 1796); W. A. Clouston, ‹Arabic Poetry› (Glasgow, 1881); C. J. Lyall, ‹Translations of Ancient Arabic Poetry› (London, 1885). The history of Arabic literature is given in Th. Nöldeke's ‹Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Poesie der Alten Araber› (Hanover, 1864), and F. F. Arbuthnot's ‹Arabic Authors› (London, 1890).

Richard Gottheil

DESCRIPTION OF A MOUNTAIN STORM

From the most celebrated of the ‹Mu 'allakât,› that of Imr-al-Kais, ‹The Wandering King›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

O FRIEND, see the lightning there! it flickered and now is gone,
as though flashed a pair of hands in the pillar of crowned cloud.
Now, was it its blaze, or the lamps of a hermit that dwells alone,
and pours o'er the twisted wicks the oil from his slender cruse?
We sat there, my fellows and I, 'twixt Dárij and al-Udhaib,
and gazed as the distance gloomed, and waited its oncoming.
The right of its mighty rain advanced over Katan's ridge;
the left of its trailing skirt swept Yadhbul and as-Sitar:
Then over Kutaifah's steep the flood of its onset drave,
and headlong before its storm the tall trees were borne to ground;

And the drift of its waters passed o'er the crags of al-Kanân,
and drave forth the white-legged deer from the refuge they sought therein.
And Taimá — it left not there the stem of a palm aloft,
nor ever a tower, save ours, firm built on the living rock.
And when first its misty shroud bore down upon Mount Thabîr,
he stood like an ancient man in a gray-streaked mantle wrapt.
The clouds cast their burdens down on the broad plain of al-Ghabit,
as a trader from al-Yaman unfolds from the bales his store;
And the topmost crest, on the morrow, of al-Mujaimir's cairn,
was heaped with the flood-borne wrack, like wool on a distaff wound.

FROM THE 'MU 'ALLAKÂT' OF ZUHÉIR

A lament for the desertion, through a war, of his former home and the haunts of his tribe: Translation of C. J. Lyall

I

ARE they of Umm Aufà's tents — these black lines that speak no word
in the stony plain of al-Mutathellam and al-Darraj?
Yea, and the place where his camp stood in ar-Rakmatan is now
like the tracery drawn afresh by the veins of the inner wrist.
The wild kine roam there large-eyed, and the deer pass to and fro,
and their younglings rise up to suck from the spots where they all lie round.
I stood there and gazed; since I saw it last twenty years had flown,
and much I pondered thereon: hard was it to know again —
The black stones in order laid in the place where the pot was set,
and the trench like a cistern's root with its sides unbroken still.
And when I knew it, at last, for his resting-place, I cried,
«Good greeting to thee, O house! Fair peace in the morn to thee!»
Look forth, O friend! canst thou see aught of ladies, camel-borne,
that journey along the upland there, above Jurthum well?
Their litters are hung with precious stuffs, and their veils thereon
cast loosely, their borders rose, as though they were dyed in blood.
Sideways they sat as their beasts clomb the ridge of as-Sûbân;
in them were the sweetness and grace of one nourished in wealth and ease.

They went on their way at dawn — they started before sunrise;
straight did they make for the vale of ar-Rass, as hand for mouth.
Dainty and playful their mood to one who should try its worth,
and faces fair to an eye skilled to trace out loveliness.
And the tassels of scarlet wool, in the spots where they gat them down
glowed red, like to *'ishrik* seeds, fresh-fallen, unbroken, bright.
And then they reached the wells where the deep-blue water lies,
they cast down their staves, and set them to pitch the tents for rest.
On their right hand rose al-Kanân, and the rugged skirts thereof —
(and in al-Kanân how many are foes and friends of mine!)
At eve they left as-Sûbân; then they crossed the ridge again,
borne on the fair-fashioned litters, all new and builded broad.

[Certain cantos, to the sixth one, reproach the author of the treachery and quarrel that led to the war and migration. Then follows a series of maxims as to human life and conduct.]

VI

Aweary am I of life's toil and travail: he who like me
has seen pass of years fourscore, well may he be sick of life!
I know what To-day unfolds, what before it was Yesterday;
but blind do I stand before the knowledge To-morrow brings.
I have seen the Dooms trample men as a blind beast at random treads:
whom they smote, he died; whom they missed, he lived on to strengthless eld.
Who gathers not friends by help, in many cases of need
is torn by the blind beast's teeth, or trodden beneath its foot.
And he who his honor shields by the doing of a kindly deed
grows richer; who shuts not the mouth of reviling, it lights on him.
And he who is lord of wealth and niggardly with his hoard,
alone is he left by his kin; naught have they for him but blame.
Who keeps faith, no blame he earns, and that man whose heart is led
to goodness unmixed with guile gains freedom and peace of soul.
Who trembles before the Dooms, yea, him shall they surely seize,
albeit he set a ladder to climb the sky.
Who spends on unworthy men his kindness with lavish hand;
no praise doth he earn, but blame, and repentence the seed thereof.

Who will not yield to the spears, when their feet turn to him in peace,
shall yield to the points thereof, and the long flashing blades of steel.
Who holds not his foe away from his cistern with sword and spear,
it is broken and spoiled; who uses not roughness, him shall men wrong.
Who seeks far away from kin for housing, takes foe for friend;
who honors himself not well, no honor gains he from men.
Who makes of his soul a beast of burden to bear men's loads,
nor shields it one day from shame, yea, sorrow shall be his lot.
Whatso be the shaping of mind that a man is born withal,
though he think it lies hid from men, it shall surely one day be known.
How many a man seemed goodly to thee while he held his peace,
whereof thou didst learn the more or less when he turned to speech.
The tongue is a man's one-half, the other, the heart within;
besides these two naught is left but a semblance of flesh and blood.
If a man be old and a fool, his folly is past all cure;
but a young man may yet grow wise and cast off his foolishness.

VII

We asked, and ye gave; we asked again, and ye gave again:
but the end of much asking must be that no giving shall follow it.

TARAFAH IBN AL 'ABD

A rebuke to a mischief-maker: Translation of C. J. Lyall

THE craft of thy busy tongue has sundered from home and kin
the cousins of both thy houses, 'Amr, 'Auf, and Mâlik's son.
For thou to thy dearest art a wind of the bitter north,
that sweeps from the Syrian hills, and wrinkles our cheeks and brows.
But balmy art thou and mild to strangers, a gracious breeze
that brings from the gulf shore showers and fills with its rain our streams.
And this, of a truth, I know—no fancy it is of mine:
who holds mean his kith and kin, the meanest of men is he!
And surely a foolish tongue, when rules not its idle prate
discretion, but shows men where thou dwellest with none to guard.

LABÎD

A lament for the afflictions of his tribe, the 'Âmir. From the ‹Diwan›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

Yea, the righteous shall keep the way of the righteous,
and to God turn the steps of all that abideth;
And to God ye return, too; with Him, only,
rest the issues of things — and all that they gather.
All that is in the Book of Knowledge is reckoned,
and before Him revealed lies all that is hidden:
Both the day when His gifts of goodness on those whom
He exalts are as palms full freighted with sweetness,
(Young, burdened with fruit, their heads bowed with clusters,
swelled to bursting, the tallest e'en as the lesser,)
And the day when avails the sin-spotted only
prayer for pardon and grace to lead him to mercy,
And the good deed he wrought to witness before him,
and the pity of Him who is Compassion:
Yea, a place in his shade, the best to abide in,
and a heart still and steadfast, right weening, honest.
Is there aught good in life? Yea, I have seen it,
even I, if the seeing bring aught of profit.
Long has Life been to me; and this is its burthen:
lone against time abide Ti'âr and Yaramram,
And Kulâf and Badî‘ the mighty, and Dalfa‘,
yea, and Timâr, that towers aloft over Kubbah;*
And the Stars, marching all night in procession,
drooping westwards, as each hies forth to his setting:
Sure and steadfast their course: the underworld draws them
gently downwards, as maidens encircling the Pillar;
And we know not, whenas their lustre is vanished,
whether long be the ropes that bind them, or little.
Lone is 'Âmir, and naught is left of her goodness,
in the meadows of al-A'râf, but her dwellings —
Ruined shadows of tents and penfolds and shelters,
bough from bough rent, and spoiled by wind and by weather.
Gone is 'Âmir, her ancients gone, all the wisest:
none remain but a folk whose war-mares are fillies,
Yet they slay them in every breach in our rampart —
yea, and they that bestride them, true-hearted helpers,
They contemn not their kin when change comes upon them,
Nor do we scorn the ties of blood and of succor.
—Now on 'Âmir be peace, and praises, and blessing,
wherever be on earth her way — or her halting!

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* The five names foregoing are those of mountains.

A FAIR LADY

From the ‹Mu 'allakât of Antara›: Translation of E. H. Palmer

'TWAS then her beauties first enslaved my heart —
Those glittering pearls and ruby lips, whose kiss
Was sweeter far than honey to the taste.
As when the merchant opes a precious box
Of perfume, such an odor from her breath
Comes toward me, harbinger of her approach;
Or like an untouched meadow, where the rain
Hath fallen freshly on the fragrant herbs
That carpet all its pure untrodden soil:
A meadow where the fragrant rain-drops fall
Like coins of silver in the quiet pools,
And irrigate it with perpetual streams;
A meadow where the sportive insects hum,
Like listless topers singing o'er their cups,
And ply their forelegs, like a man who tries
With maimèd hand to use the flint and steel.

THE DEATH OF 'ABDALLÂH

AND WHAT MANNER OF MAN HE WAS

From the original poem of Duraid, son of as-Simmah, of Jusharn: Translation of C. J. Lyall

I WARNED them both, 'Ârid, and the men who went 'Ârid's way —
the house of the Black Mother: yea, ye are all my witnesses,
I said to them: « Think — even now, two thousand are on your track,
all laden with sword and spear, their captains in Persian mail! »
But when they would hearken not, I followed their road, though I
knew well they were fools, and that I walked not in Wisdom's way.
For am not I but one of the Ghazîyah? and if they err
I err with my house; and if the Ghazîyah go right, so I.
I read them my rede, one day, at Mun'araj al-Liwa:
the morrow, at noon, they saw my counsel as I had seen.
A shout rose, and voices cried, « The horsemen have slain a knight! »
I said, « Is it 'Abdallâh, the man whom you say is slain? »
I sprang to his side: the spears had riddled his body through
as a weaver on outstretched web deftly plies the sharp-toothed comb.

I stood as a camel stands with fear in her heart, and seeks
the stuffed skin with eager mouth, and thinks — is her youngling slain?
I plied spear above him till the riders had left their prey,
and over myself black blood flowed in a dusky tide.
I fought as a man who gives his life for his brother's life,
who knows that his time is short, that Death's doom above him hangs.
But know ye, if 'Abdallâh be dead, and his place a void,
no weakling unsure of hand, and no holder-back was he!
Alert, keen, his loins well girt, his leg to the middle bare,
unblemished and clean of limb, a climber to all things high;
No wailer before ill-luck; one mindful in all he did
to think how his work to-day would live in to-morrow's tale,
Content to bear hunger's pain though meat lay beneath his hand —
to labor in ragged shirt that those whom he served might rest.
If Dearth laid her hand on him, and Famine devoured his store,
he gave but the gladlier what little to him they spared.
He dealt as a youth with Youth, until, when his head grew hoar,
and age gathered o'er his brow, to lightness he said, «Begone!»
Yea, somewhat it soothes my soul that never I said to him
«thou liest,» nor grudged him aught of mine that he sought of me!

ASH-SHANFARÀ OF AZD

A picture of womanhood, from the ‹Mufaḍḍaliyât›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

Alas, Umm 'Amr set her face to depart and went:
gone is she, and when she sped, she left with us no farewell.
Her purpose was quickly shaped — no warning gave she to friends,
though there she had dwelt, hard-by, her camels all day with ours.
Yea, thus in our eyes she dwelt, from morning to noon and eve —
she brought to an end her tale, and fleeted and left us lone.
So gone is Umaimah, gone! and leaves here a heart in pain:
my life was to yearn for her; and now its delight is fled.
She won me, whenas, shamefaced — no maid to let fall her veil,
no wanton to glance behind — she walked forth with steady tread;
Her eyes seek the ground, as though they looked for a thing lost there;
she turns not to left or right — her answer is brief and low.
She rises before day dawns to carry her supper forth
to wives who have need — dear alms, when such gifts are few enow!

Afar from the voice of blame, her tent stands for all to see,
when many a woman's tent is pitched in the place of scorn.
No gossip to bring him shame from her does her husband dread—
when mention is made of women, pure and unstained is she.
The day done, at eve glad comes he home to his eyes' delight:
he needs not to ask of her, «Say, where didst thou pass the day?»—
And slender is she where meet, and full where it so beseems,
and tall and straight, a fairy shape, if such on earth there be.
And nightlong as we sat there, methought that the tent was roofed
above with basil-sprays, all fragrant in dewy eve—
Sweet basil, from Halyah dale, its branches abloom and fresh,
that fills all the place with balm—no starveling of desert sands.

ZEYNAB AT THE KA'BAH

From 'Umar ibn Rabí'a's ‹Love Poems›: Translation of W. Gifford Palgrave

Ah, for the throes of a heart sorely wounded!
Ah, for the eyes that have smit me with madness!
Gently she moved in the calmness of beauty,
Moved as the bough to the light breeze of morning.
Dazzled my eyes as they gazed, till before me
All was a mist and confusion of figures.
Ne'er had I sought her, ne'er had she sought me;
Fated the love, and the hour, and the meeting.
There I beheld her as she and her damsels
Paced 'twixt the temple and outer inclosure;
Damsels the fairest, the loveliest, gentlest,
Passing like slow-wandering heifers at evening;
Ever surrounding with comely observance
Her whom they honor, the peerless of women.
«Omar is near: let us mar his devotions,
Cross on his path that he needs must observe us;
Give him a signal, my sister, demurely.»
«Signals I gave, but he marked not or heeded,»
Answered the damsel, and hasted to meet me.
Ah, for that night by the vale of the sandhills!
Ah, for the dawn when in silence we parted!
He whom the morn may awake to her kisses
Drinks from the cup of the blessed in heaven.

THE UNVEILED MAID

From 'Umar ibn Rabí'a's ‹Love Poems›: Translation of W. Gifford Palgrave

In the valley of Mohassib I beheld her where she stood:
Caution bade me turn aside, but love forbade and fixed me there.
Was it sunlight? or the windows of a gleaming mosque at eve,
Lighted up for festal worship? or was all my fancy's dream?
Ah, those earrings! ah, that necklace! Naufel's daughter sure the maid,
Or of Hashim's princely lineage, and the Servant of the Sun!
But a moment flashed the splendor, as the o'er-hasty handmaids drew
Round her with a jealous hand the jealous curtains of the tent.
Speech nor greeting passed between us; but she saw me, and I saw
Face the loveliest of all faces, hands the fairest of all hands.
Daughter of a better earth, and nurtured by a brighter sky;
Would I ne'er had seen thy beauty! Hope is fled, but love remains.

FROM THE DÎWÂN OF AL-NÂBIGHAH

A eulogy of the valor and culture of the men of Ghassân, written in time of the poet's political exile from them: Translation of C. J. Lyall

Leave me alone, O Umaimah — alone with my sleepless pain —
alone with the livelong night and the wearily lingering stars;
It draws on its length of gloom; methinks it will never end,
nor ever the Star-herd lead his flock to their folds of rest; —
Alone with a breast whose griefs, that roamed far afield by day,
the darkness has brought all home: in legions they throng around.
A favor I have with 'Amr, a favor his father bore
toward me of old; a grace that carried no scorpion sting.
I swear (and my word is true — an oath that hath no reserve,
and naught in my heart is hid save fair thought of him, my friend) —
If these twain his fathers were, who lie in their graves; the one
al-Jillik, the others al-Saidâ, by Hârib's side,
And Hârith, of Jafnah's line, the lord of his folk of old —
yea, surely his might shall reach the home of his enemy!
In him hope is sure of help when men say — « The host is sped,
the horsemen of Ghassân's line unblemished, no hireling herd,
His cousins, all near of kin, their chief 'Amr, 'Âmir's son —
a people are they whose might in battle shall never fail!»

When goes forth the host to war, above them in circles wheel
battalions of eagles, pointing the path to battalions more;
Their friendship is old and tried, fast comrades, in foray bred
to look unafraid on blood, as hounds to the chase well trained.
Behold them, how they sit there, behind where their armies meet,
watching with eyes askance, like elders in gray furs wrapt,
Intent; for they know full well that those whom they follow, when
the clash of the hosts shall come, will bear off the victory.
Ay, well is that custom known, a usage that time has proved
when lances are laid in rest on withers of steeds arow —
Of steeds in the spear-play skilled, with lips for the fight drawn back,
their bodies with wounds all scarred, some bleeding and some half-healed.
And down leap the riders where the battle is strait and stern,
and spring in the face of Death like stallions amid the herd;
Between them they give and take deep draughts of the wine of doom
as their hands ply the white swords, thin and keen in the smiting-edge.
In shards fall the morions burst by the fury of blow on blow,
and down to the eyebrows, cleft, fly shattered the skulls beneath.
In them no defect is found, save only that in their swords
are notches, a many, gained from smiting of host on host:
An heirloom of old, those blades, from the fight of Halîmah's day,
and many the mellay fierce that since has their temper proved;
Therewith do they cleave in twain the hauberk of double woof,
and kindle the rock beneath to fire, ere the stroke is done.
A nature is theirs — God gives the like to no other men —
a wisdom that never sleeps, a bounty that never fails.
Their home is God's own land, His chosen of old; their faith
is steadfast. Their hope is set on naught but the world to come.
Their sandals are soft and fine, and girded with chastity,
they welcome with garlands sweet the dawn of the Feast of Palms.
There greets them when they come home full many a handmaid fine,
and ready, on trestles, hang the mantles of scarlet silk.
Yea, softly they wrap their limbs, well-knowing of wealth and ease,
in rich raiment, white-sleeved, green at the shoulder — in royal guise.
They look not on Weal as men who know not that Woe comes, too:
they look not on evil days as though they would never mend.

Lo, this was my gift to Ghassân, what time I sought
My people; and all my paths were darkened, and strait my ways.

NUSAIB

The poem characterizes the separation of a wife and mother — a slave — from her family: Translation of C. J. Lyall

THEY said last night — To-morrow at first of dawning,
or maybe at eventide, must Laila go! —
My heart at the word lay helpless, as lies a Kaṭā
in net night-long, and struggles with fast-bound wing.
Two nestlings she left alone, in a nest far distant,
a nest which the winds smite, tossing it to and fro.
They hear but the whistling breeze, and stretch necks to greet her;
but she they await — the end of her days is come!
So lies she, and neither gains in the night her longing,
nor brings her the morning any release from pain.

VENGEANCE

By al-Find, of the Zimman Tribe: Translation of C. J. Lyall

FORGIVENESS had we for Hind's sons:
We said, «The men our brothers are;
The days may bring that yet again
They be the folk that once they were.»

But when the Ill stood clear and plain,
And naked Wrong was bold to brave,
And naught was left but bitter Hate —
We paid them in the coin they gave.

We strode as stalks a lion forth
At dawn, a lion wrathful-eyed;
Blows rained we, dealing shame on shame,
And humbling pomp and quelling pride.

Too kind a man may be with fools,
And nerve them but to flout him more;
And Mischief oft may bring thee peace,
When Mildness works not Folly's cure.

PATIENCE

From Ibrahîm, Son of Kunaif of Nabhan: Translation of C. J. Lyall

BE PATIENT: for free-born men to bear is the fairest thing,
And refuge against Time's wrong or help from his hurt is none;
And if it availed man aught to bow him to fluttering Fear,
Or if he could ward off hurt by humbling himself to Ill,
To bear with a valiant front the full brunt of every stroke
And onset of Fate were still the fairest and best of things.
But how much the more, when none outruns by a span his Doom,
And refuge from God's decree nor was nor will ever be,
And sooth, if the changing Days have wrought us—their wonted way—
A lot mixed of weal and woe, yet one thing they could not do:
They have not made soft or weak the stock of our sturdy spear;
They have not abased our hearts to doing of deeds of shame.
We offer to bear their weight, a handful of noble souls:
Though laden beyond all weight of man, they uplift the load.
So shield we with Patience fair our souls from the stroke of Shame;
Our honors are whole and sound, though others be lean enow.

ABU SAKHR

On a lost love. From the ‹Hamásah›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

BY HIM who brings weeping and laughter | who deals Death and Life as He wills—
she left me to envy the wild deer | that graze twain and twain without fear!
Oh, love of her, heighten my heart's pain, | and strengthen the pang every night;
oh, comfort that days bring, forgetting | —the last of all days be thy tryst!
I marveled how swiftly the time sped | between us, the moment we met;
but when that brief moment was ended | how wearily dragged he his feet!

AN ADDRESS TO THE BELOVED

By Abu l-'Ata of Sind. From the ‹Hamásah›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

OF THEE did I dream, while spears between us were quivering—
and sooth, of our blood full deep had drunken the tawny shafts!
I know not—by Heaven I swear, and here is the word I say!—
this pang, is it love-sickness, or wrought by a spell from thee?
If it be a spell, then grant me grace of thy love-longing—
if other the sickness be, then none is the guilt of thine!

A FORAY

By Ja'far ibn 'Ulbah. From the ‹Hamásah›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

THAT even when, under Sábhal's twin peaks, upon us drave
the horsemen, troop upon troop, and the foeman pressed us sore—
They said to us, «Two things lie before you; now must ye choose
the points of the spears couched at ye; or if ye will not, chains!»
We answered them, «Yea this thing may fall to *you* after the fight,
when men shall be left on ground, and none shall arise again;
But we know not, if we quail before the assault of Death,
how much may be left of life—the goal is too dim to see.»
We rode to the strait of battle; there cleared us a space, around
the white swords in our right hands which the smiths had furbished fair.
On them fell the edge of my blade, on that day of Sabhal date;
And mine was the share thereof, wherever my fingers closed.

FATALITY

By Katari, ibn al-Fujâ'ah, ibn Ma'zin. From the ‹Hamásah›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

I SAID to her, when she fled in amaze and breathless
before the array of battle, «Why dost thou tremble?
Yea, if but a day of Life thou shouldst beg with weeping,
beyond what thy Doom appoints, thou wouldst not gain it!
Be still, then; and face the onset of Death, high-hearted,
for none upon earth shall win to abide forever.
No raiment of praise the cloak of old age and weakness;
none such for the coward who bows like a reed in the tempest.

The pathway of death is set for all men to travel.
the crier of Death proclaims through the earth his empire.
Who dies not when young and sound, dies old and weary—
cut off in his length of days from all love and kindness;
And what for a man is left of delight of living,—
past use—flung away—a worthless and worn-out chattel?»

IMPLACABILITY

By al-Fadl, ibn al-Abbas, ibn Utbah. From the ‹Hamásah›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

Sons of our uncle, peace! Cousins of ours, be still!
drag not to light from its grave the strife that we buried there.
Hope not for honor from us, while ye heap upon us shame,
or think that we shall forbear from vexing when ye vex us.
Sons of our uncle, peace! lay not our rancor raw;
walk now gently awhile, as once ye were wont to go.
Ay, God knows that we, we love you not, in sooth!
and that we blame ye not that ye have no love for us.
Each of us has his ground for the loathing his fellow moves:
a grace it is from the Lord that we hate ye—ye us!

PARENTAL AFFECTION

A poem by Hittân ibn al-Mu'allà of Tayyi. From the ‹Hamásah›: Translation of C. J. Lyall

Fortune has brought me down—her wonted way—
from stature high and great, to low estate;
Fortune has rent away my plenteous store;
of all my wealth, honor alone is left.
Fortune has turned my joy to tears—how oft
did Fortune make me laugh with what she gave!
But for these girls, the *katā's* downy brood,
unkindly thrust from door to door as hard—
Far would I roam, and wide, to seek my bread,
in earth, that has no lack of breadth and length.
Nay, but our children in our midst, what else
but our hearts are they, walking on the ground?
If but the breeze blow harsh on one of them,
mine eye says «no» to slumber, all night long!

A TRIBESMAN'S VALOR

Poem by Sa'd, son of Malik, of the Kais Tribe: Translation of C. J. Lyall

How evil a thing is war, that bows men to shameful rest!
War burns away in her blaze all glory and boasting of men:
Naught stands but the valiant heart to face pain — the hard-hoofed steed —
The ring-mail set close and firm, the nail-crowned helms and the spears;
And onset, again after rout, when men shrink from the serried array —
Then, then, fall away all the vile, the hirelings! and shame is strong!
War girds up her skirts before them, and evil unmixed is bare.
For their hearts were for maidens veiled, not for driving the gathered spoil:
Yea, evil the heirs we leave, sons of Yakshar and al-Laksh!

But let flee her fires who will, no flinching for me, son of Kais!
O children of Kais! stand firm before her! gain peace or give:
Who seeks flight before her fear, his Doom stands and bars the road.
Away! Death allows no quitting of place, and brands are bare!
What is life for us, when the uplands and valleys are ours no more?
Ah, where are the mighty now? the spears and generous hands?

FROM THE QU'RAN

Translation of George Sale

CHAPTER XXXV.: INTITLED «THE CREATOR.» REVEALED AT MECCA

IN THE name of the most merciful GOD. Praise be unto GOD, the creator of heaven and earth; who maketh the angels *his* messengers, furnished with two, and three, and four *pair* of wings: GOD maketh what addition he pleaseth unto *his* creatures; for GOD *is* almighty. The mercy which GOD shall freely bestow on mankind, *there is* none who can withhold; and what he shall withhold, *there is* none who can bestow, besides him: and he *is* the mighty, the wise. O men, remember the favor of GOD towards you: is there any creator, besides GOD, who provideth food for you from heaven and earth? *There is* no GOD but he: how therefore are ye turned aside *from acknowledging his unity?* If they accuse thee of imposture, apostles before thee have also been accused of imposture; and unto GOD shall *all* things return. O men, verily the promise of GOD is true: let not therefore the present life deceive you, neither let the deceiver deceive you concerning GOD: for Satan *is* an enemy unto you; wherefore hold him for an enemy: he only inviteth his confederates to be the inhabitants of hell. For those who believe not *there is prepared* a severe torment: but for those who shall believe and do that which is right, *is prepared* mercy and a great reward. Shall he therefore for whom his evil work hath been prepared, and who imagineth it to be good, *be as he who is rightly disposed, and discerneth the truth?* Verily GOD will cause to err whom he pleaseth, and will direct whom he pleaseth. Let not thy soul therefore be spent in sighs for their sakes, *on account of their obstinacy;* for GOD well knoweth that which they do. *It is God* who sendeth the winds, and raiseth a cloud: and we drive the same unto a dead country, and thereby quicken the earth after it hath been dead; so *shall* the resurrection *be.* Whoever desireth excellence; unto GOD *doth* all excellence *belong:* unto him ascendeth the good speech; and the righteous work will he exalt. But as for them who devise wicked *plots*, they shall suffer a severe punishment; and the device of those *men* shall be rendered vain. GOD created you *first* of the dust, and afterwards of seed: and he hath made you man and wife. No female conceiveth, or bringeth forth, but with his knowledge. Nor is any thing added unto the age of him whose life is prolonged, neither is any thing diminished from his age, but *the same is written* in the book *of God's decrees.* Verily this is easy with GOD. The two seas are not to be held in comparison: this *is* fresh *and* sweet, pleasant to drink; but that *is* salt *and* bitter: yet out of each of them ye eat fish, and take ornaments for you to wear. Thou seest the ships also ploughing *the waves* thereof, that ye may seek *to enrich yourselves by commerce*, of the abundance *of God:* peradventure ye will be thankful. He causeth the night to succeed the day, and he causeth the day to succeed the night; and he obligeth the sun and the moon to perform their services: each *of them* runneth an appointed course. This is GOD, your LORD: his *is* the kingdom. But the *idols* which ye invoke besides him have not the power even over the skin of a date-stone: if ye invoke them, they will not hear your calling; and although they should hear, yet they would not answer you. On the day of resurrection they shall disclaim your having associated *them with God:* and none shall declare unto thee *the truth*, like one who is well acquainted *therewith.* O men, ye have need of GOD; but GOD is self-sufficient, and to be praised. If he pleaseth, he can take you away, and produce a new creature *in* *your stead:* neither *will* this *be* difficult with GOD. A burdened *soul* shall not bear the burden of another: and if a heavy-burdened *soul* call *on another* to bear part of its *burden*, no part thereof shall be borne *by the person who shall be called on*, although he be *ever so nearly* related. Thou shalt admonish those who fear their LORD in secret, and are constant at prayer: and whoever cleanseth himself *from the guilt of disobedience*, cleanseth himself to *the advantage* of his own soul; for all shall be assembled before GOD *at the last day.* The blind and the seeing shall not be held equal; neither darkness and light; nor the cool shade and the scorching wind: neither shall the living and the dead be held equal. GOD shall cause him to hear whom he pleaseth: but thou shalt not make those to hear who are in *their* graves. Thou *art* no other than a preacher; verily we have sent thee with truth, a bearer of good tidings, and a denouncer of threats.

There hath been no nation, but a preacher hath in past times been *conversant* among them: if they charge thee with imposture, they who were before them likewise charged *their apostles* with imposture. Their apostles came unto them with evident *miracles*, and with *divine* writings, and with the Enlightening Book: afterwards I chastised those who were unbelievers; and how *severe* was my vengeance! Dost thou not see that GOD sendeth down rain from heaven, and that we thereby produce fruits of various colors? In the mountains also *there are* some tracts white and red, of various colors; and *others are* of a deep black: and of men, and beasts, and cattle *there are* whose colors *are* in like manner various. Such only of his servants fear GOD as are endued with understanding: verily GOD *is* mighty *and* ready to forgive. Verily they who read the book of GOD, and are constant at prayer, and give alms out of what we have bestowed on them, *both* in secret and openly, hope for a merchandise which shall not perish: that *God* may fully pay them their wages, and make them a *superabundant* addition of his liberality; for he *is* ready to forgive *the faults of his servants, and* to requite *their endeavors.* That which we have revealed unto thee of the book *of the Korân* is the truth, confirming the *scriptures* which *were revealed* before it: for GOD knoweth *and* regardeth his servants. And we have given the book *of the Korân* in heritage unto such of our servants as we have chosen: of them *there is one* who injureth his own soul; and *there is another* of them who keepeth the middle way; and *there is another* of them who outstrippeth *others* in good *works*, by the permission of GOD. This is the great excellence. They shall be introduced into gardens of perpetual abode; they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their clothing therein *shall be* of silk: and they shall say, Praise be unto GOD, who hath taken away sorrow from us! verily our LORD *is* ready to forgive *the sinners*, and to reward *the obedient:* who hath caused us to take up our rest in a dwelling of *eternal* stability, through his bounty, wherein no labor shall touch us, neither shall any weariness affect us. But for the unbelievers *is prepared* the fire of hell: it shall not be decreed them to die *a second time;* neither shall *any part* of the punishment thereof be made lighter unto them. Thus shall every infidel be rewarded. And they shall cry out aloud in *hell*, *saying*, LORD, take us hence, and we will work righteousness, and not what we have *formerly* wrought. *But it shall be answered them*, Did we not grant you lives of length sufficient, that whoever would be warned might be warned therein; and did not the preacher come unto you? Taste therefore *the pains of hell.* And the unjust shall have no protector. Verily GOD knoweth the secrets *both* of heaven and earth, for he knoweth the innermost parts of the breasts *of men.* It is he who hath made you to succeed in the earth. Whoever shall disbelieve, on him *be* his unbelief; and their unbelief shall only gain the unbelievers greater indignation in the sight of their LORD; and their unbelief shall only increase the perdition of the unbelievers. Say, what think ye of your deities which ye invoke besides GOD? Show me what *part* of the earth they have created. Or had they any share in *the creation of* the heavens? Have we given unto *the idolaters* any book *of revelations*, so that they *may rely* on any proof therefrom *to authorize their practice?* Nay; but the ungodly make unto one another only deceitful promises. Verily GOD sustaineth the heavens and the earth, lest they fail: and if they should fail, none could support the same besides him; he is gracious *and* merciful. *The Koreish* swore by GOD, with a most solemn oath, that if a preacher had come unto them, they would surely have been more *willingly* directed than any nation: but now a preacher is come unto them, it hath only increased in them *their* aversion *from the truth*, *their* arrogance in the earth, and *their* contriving of evil; but the contrivance of evil shall only encompass the authors thereof. Do they expect any other than the punishment awarded against the *unbelievers* of former times? For thou shalt not find any change in the ordinance of GOD; neither shalt thou find any variation in the ordinance of GOD. Have they not gone through the earth, and seen what hath been the end of those who were before them; although they were more mighty in strength than they? GOD is not to be frustrated by anything either in heaven or on earth; for he is wise *and* powerful. If GOD should punish men according to what they deserve, he would not leave on the back of *the earth* so much as a beast; but he respiteth them to a determined time; and when their time shall come, verily GOD will regard his servants.

CHAPTER LV.: INTITLED «THE MERCIFUL.» REVEALED AT MECCA

IN THE name of the most merciful GOD. The Merciful hath taught *his servant* the Korân. He created man: he hath taught him distinct speech. The sun and the moon *run their courses* according to a certain rule: and the vegetables which creep on the ground, and the trees submit *to his disposition.* He also raised the heaven; and he appointed the balance, that ye should not transgress in respect to the balance: wherefore observe a just weight; and diminish not the balance. And the earth hath he prepared for living creatures: therein *are various* fruits, and palm-trees bearing sheaths of flowers; and grain having chaff, and leaves. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? He created man of dried clay like an earthen vessel: but he created the genii of fire clear from smoke. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? *He is* the LORD of the east, and the LORD of the west. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? He hath let loose the two seas, that they meet each another: between them *is placed* a bar which they cannot pass. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? From them are taken forth unions and lesser pearls. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? His also *are* the ships, carrying their sails aloft in the sea like mountains. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? Every *creature* which *liveth* on *the earth is* subject to decay: but the glorious and honorable countenance of thy LORD shall remain *for ever.* Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? Unto him do all *creatures* which *are* in heaven and earth make petition; every day *is* he *employed* in *some new* work. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? We will surely attend to *judge* you, O men and genii, *at the last day*. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? O ye collective body of genii and men, if ye be able to pass out of the confines of heaven and earth, pass forth: ye shall not pass forth but by absolute power. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? A flame of fire without smoke, and a smoke without flame shall be sent down upon you; and ye shall not be able to defend yourselves *therefrom*. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? And when the heaven shall be rent in sunder, and shall become *red as* a rose, *and shall melt* like ointment: (Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny?) On that day neither man nor genius shall be asked concerning his sin. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? The wicked shall be known by their marks; and they shall be taken by the forelocks, and the feet, *and shall be cast into hell*. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? This *is* hell which the wicked deny as a falsehood: they shall pass to and fro between the same and hot boiling water. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? But for him who dreadeth the tribunal of his LORD *are prepared* two gardens: (Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny?) In each of them *shall be* two fountains flowing. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? In each of them *shall there be* of every fruit two kinds. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? They shall repose on couches, the linings whereof *shall be* of thick silk interwoven with gold; and the fruit of the two gardens *shall be* near at hand *to gather*. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? Therein *shall receive them beauteous damsels*, refraining their eyes *from beholding any besides their spouses:* whom no man shall have deflowered before them, neither any Jinn: (Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny?) *Having complexions* like rubies and pearls. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? *Shall* the reward of good works *be* any other good? Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? And besides these there *shall be* two *other* gardens: (Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny?) Of a dark green. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? In each of them *shall be* two fountains pouring forth plenty of water. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? In each of them *shall be* fruits, and palm-trees, and pomegranates. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? Therein *shall be* agreeable and beauteous *damsels:* Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? Whom no man shall have deflowered before *their destined spouses*, nor any Jinn. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? *Therein shall they delight themselves*, lying on green cushions and beautiful carpets. Which, therefore, of your LORD'S benefits will ye ungratefully deny? Blessed be the name of thy LORD, possessed of glory and honor!

CHAPTER LXXXIV.: INTITLED "THE RENDING IN SUNDER." REVEALED AT MECCA

IN THE name of the most merciful GOD. When the heaven shall be rent in sunder, and shall obey its LORD, and shall be capable *thereof;* and when the earth shall be stretched out, and shall cast forth that which *is* therein, and shall remain empty, and shall obey its LORD, and shall be capable *thereof:* O man, verily laboring thou laborest to *meet* thy LORD, and thou shalt meet him. And he who shall have his book given into his right hand shall be called to an easy account, and shall turn unto his family with joy: but he who shall have his book given him behind his back shall invoke destruction *to fall upon him*, and he shall be sent into hell to be burned; because he rejoiced insolently amidst his family *on earth*. Verily he thought he should never return *unto God:* yea verily, but his LORD beheld him. Wherefore I swear by the redness of the sky after sunset, and by the night, and the *animals* which it driveth together, and by the moon when she is in the full; ye shall surely be transferred *successively* from state to state. What *aileth* them, therefore, that they believe not *the resurrection;* and that, when the Korân is read unto them, they worship not? Yea: the unbelievers accuse *the same* of imposture: but GOD well knoweth the *malice* which they keep hidden *in their breasts*. Wherefore denounce unto them a grievous punishment, except those who believe and do good works: for them *is prepared* a never-failing reward.

THE PRAYER OF AL-HARIRI

From the ‹Makamat› of al-Hariri of Basra: Translation of Theodore Preston

We praise thee, O God,
For whatever perspicuity of language thou hast taught us,
And whatever eloquence thou hast inspired us with,
As we praise thee
For the bounty which thou hast diffused,
And the mercy which thou hast spread abroad:
And we pray thee to guard us
From extravagant expressions and frivolous superfluities
As we pray Thee to guard us
From the shame of incapacity and the disgrace of hesitation:
And we entreat thee to exempt us from temptation
By the flattery of the admirer or connivance of the indulgent,
As we entreat thee to exempt us from exposure
To the slight of the detractor or aspersion of the defamer:
And we ask thy forgiveness
Should our frailties betray us into ambiguities,
As we ask thy forgiveness
Should our steps advance to the verge of improprieties:
And we beg thee freely to bestow
Propitious succor to lead us aright,
And a heart turning in unison with truth,
And a language adorned with veracity,
And style supported by conclusiveness,
And accuracy that may exclude incorrectness,
And firmness of purpose that may overcome caprice,
And sagacity whereby we may attain discrimination;
That thou wilt aid us by thy guidance unto right conceptions,
And enable us with thy help to express them with clearness,
And thou wilt guard us from error in narration,
And keep us from folly even in pleasantry,
So that we may be safe from the censure of sarcastic tongues,
And secure from the fatal effects of false ornament,
And may not resort to any improper source,
And occupy no position that would entail regret,
Nor be assailed by any ill consequences or blame,
Nor be constrained to apology for inconsideration.
O God, fulfill for us this our desire,
And put us in possession of this our earnest wish,
And exclude us not from thy ample shade,
Nor leave us to become the prey of the devourer:

For we stretch to thee the hand of entreaty,
And profess entire submission to thee, and contrition of spirit,
And seek with humble supplication and appliances of hope
The descent of thy vast grace and comprehensive bounty.

THE WORDS OF HARETH IBN-HAMMAM

From the ‹Makamat› of al-Hariri of Barra: Translation of Theodore Preston

On a night whose aspect displayed both light and shade,
And whose moon was like a magic circlet of silver,
I was engaged in evening conversation at Koufa
With companions who had been nourished on the milk of eloquence,
So the charms of conversation fascinated us,
While wakefulness still prevailed among us,
Until the moon had at length disappeared in the West.
But when the gloom of night had thus drawn its curtain,
And nothing but slumber remained abroad,
We heard from the door the low call of a benighted traveler,
And then followed the knock of one seeking admission;
And we answered, «Who comes here this darksome night?»
And the stranger replied:—

«Listen ye who here are dwelling!
May you so be kept from ill!
So may mischief ne'er befall you,
Long as life your breast shall fill!
Gloom of dismal night and dreary
Drives a wretch to seek your door,
Whose disheveled hoary tresses
All with dust are sprinkled o'er;
Who, though destitute and lonely,
Far has roamed on hill and dale,
Till his form became thus crooked,
And his cheek thus deadly pale;
Who, though faint as slender crescent,
Ventures here for aid to sue,
Hospitable meal and shelter
Claiming first of all from you.
Welcome then to food and dwelling
One so worthy both to share,
Sure to prove content and thankful,
Sure to laud your friendly care.»

Fascinated then by the sweetness of his language and delivery,
And readily inferring what this prelude betokened,

We hasted to open the door, and received him with welcome,
Saying to the servant, «Hie! Hie! Bring whatever is ready!»
But the stranger said, «By Him who brought me to your abode,
I will not taste of your hospitality, unless you pledge to me
That you will not permit me to be an incumbrance to you,
Nor impose on yourselves necessity of eating on my account.»

. . . .

Now it was just as if he had been informed of our wishes,
Or had shot from the same bow as our sentiments;
So we gratified him by acceding to the condition,
And highly commended him for his accommodating disposition.
But when the servant had produced what was ready,
And the candle was lighted up in the midst of us,
I regarded him attentively, and lo! it was Abu-Zeid;
Whereupon I addressed my companions in these words:—
«May you have joy of the guest who has repaired to you:
        For though the moon of the heavens has set,
        The full moon of poetry has arisen;
        And though the moon of the eclipse has disappeared,
        The full moon of eloquence has shone forth.»
        So the wine of joy infused itself into them,
        And sleep flew away from the corners of their eyes,
And they rejected the slumber which they had contemplated,
And began to resume the pleasantry which they had laid aside,
While Abu-Zeid remained intent on the business in hand.
But as soon as he desired the removal of what was before him,
I said to him, «Entertain us with one of thy strange anecdotes,
Or with an account of one of thy wonderful journeys.»
And he said:—«The result of long journeys brought me to this land,
Myself being in a state of hunger and distress,
And my wallet light as the heart of the mother of Moses;
So I arose, when dark night had settled on the world,
Though with weary feet, to seek a lodging, or obtain a loaf;
Till, being driven on by the instigation of hunger,
And by fate, so justly called 'the parent of adventures,'
I stood at the door of a house and improvised these words:—

        «'Inmates of this abode, all hail! all hail!
        Long may you live in plenty's verdant vale.
        Oh, grant your aid to one by toil opprest,
        Way-worn, benighted, destitute, distrest;
        Whose tortured entrails only hunger hold
        (For since he tasted food two days are told);
        A wretch who finds not where to lay his head,
        Though brooding night her weary wing hath spread,

But roams in anxious hope a friend to meet,
Whose bounty, like a spring of water sweet,
May heal his woes; a friend who straight will say,
«Come in! 'Tis time thy staff aside to lay.»'

«But there came out to me a boy in a short tunic, who said:—

«'By Him who hospitable rites ordained,
And first of all, and best, those rites maintained,
I swear that friendly converse and a home
Is all we have for those who nightly roam.'

«And I replied, 'What can I do with an empty house,
And a host who is himself thus utterly destitute?
But what is thy name, boy? for thy intelligence charms me.'
He replied, 'My name is Zeid, and I was reared at Faid;
And my mother Barrah (who is such as her name implies),
Told me she married one of the nobles of Serong and Ghassân,
Who deserted her stealthily, and there was an end of him.'
Now I knew by these distinct signs that he was my child,
But my poverty deterred me from discovering myself to him.»

Then we asked if he wished to take his son to live with him;
And he replied, «If only my purse were heavy enough,
It would be easy for me to undertake the charge of him.»
So we severally undertook to contribute a portion of it,
Whereupon he returned thanks for this our bounty,
And was so profusely lavish in his acknowledgments,
That we thought his expression of gratitude excessive.
And as soon as he had collected the coin into his scrip,
He looked at me as the deceiver looks at the deceived,
And laughed heartily, and then indited these lines:—

«O thou who, deceived
By a tale, hast believed
A mirage to be truly a lake,
Though I ne'er had expected
My fraud undetected,
Or doubtful my meaning to make!

I confess that I lied
When I said that my bride
And my first-born were Barrah and Zeid;
But guile is my part,
And deception my art,
And by these are my gains ever made.

Such schemes I devise
That the cunning and wise
Never practiced the like or conceived;
Nor Asmai nor Komait
Any wonders relate
Like those that my wiles have achieved.

But if these I disdain,
I abandon my gain,
And by fortune at once am refused:
Then pardon their use,
And accept my excuse,
Nor of guilt let my guile be accused."

Then he took leave of me, and went away from me,
Leaving in my heart the embers of lasting regret.

THE CALIPH OMAR BIN ABD AL-AZIZ AND THE POETS

A Semi-Poetical Tale: Translation of Sir Richard Burton, in 'Supplemental Nights to the Book of The Thousand Nights and A Night'

It is said that when the Caliphate devolved on Omar bin Abd al-Aziz, (of whom Allah accept!) the poets resorted to him, as they had been used to resort to the Caliphs before him, and abode at his door days and days; but he suffered them not to enter till there came to him 'Adi bin Artah, who stood high in esteem with him. Jarir [another poet] accosted him, and begged him to crave admission for them to the presence; so 'Adi answered, "'Tis well," and going in to Omar, said to him, "The poets are at thy door, and have been there days and days; yet hast thou not given them leave to enter, albeit their sayings abide, and their arrows from the mark never fly wide." Quoth Omar, "What have I to do with the poets?" And quoth 'Adi, "O Commander of the Faithful, the Prophet (*Abhak!*) was praised by a poet, and gave him largesse—and in him is an exemplar to every Moslem." Quoth Omar, "And who praised him?" And quoth 'Adi, "Abbás bin Mirdás praised him, and he clad him with a suit and said, 'O Generosity! Cut off from me his tongue!'" Asked the Caliph, "Dost thou remember what he said?" And 'Adi answered, "Yes." Rejoined Omar, "Then repeat it;" so 'Adi repeated:—

"I saw thee, O thou best of the human race, | Bring out a book
which brought to graceless, grace.
Thou showedst righteous road to men astray | From right, when
darkest wrong had ta'en its place:—
Thou with Islâm didst light the gloomiest way, | Quenching
with proof live coals of frowardness:
I own for Prophet, my Mohammed's self, | and men's award
upon his word we base.
Thou madest straight the path that crooked ran | Where in old
days foul growth o'ergrew its face.
Exalt be thou in Joy's empyrean! | And Allah's glory ever grow
apace!"

"And indeed," continued 'Adi, "this Elegy on the Prophet (*Abhak!*) is well known, and to comment on it would be tedious."

Quoth Omar, "Who [of the poets] is at the door?" And quoth 'Adi, "Among them is Omar ibn Rabí'ah, the Korashi;" whereupon the Caliph cried, "May Allah show him no favor, neither quicken him! Was it not he who spoke impiously [in praising his love]?—

'Could I in my clay-bed [the grave] with Ialma repose, | There
to me were better than Heaven or Hell!'

Had he not [continued the Caliph] been the enemy of Allah, he had wished for her in this world; so that he might, after, repent and return to righteous dealing. By Allah! he shall not come in to me! Who is at the door other than he?"

Quoth 'Adi, "Jamil bin Ma'mar al-Uzri is at the door." And quoth Omar, "'Tis he who saith in one of his love-Elegies:—

'Would Heaven, conjoint we lived! and if I die, | Death only
grant me a grave within her grave!
For I'd no longer deign to live my life | If told, "Upon her head
is laid the pave."'

Quoth Omar, "Away with him from me! Who is at the door?" And quoth 'Adi, "Kutthayir 'Azzah": whereupon Omar cried, "'Tis he who saith in one of his [impious] Odes:—

'Some talk of faith and creed and nothing else, | And wait for
pains of Hell in prayer-seat;
But did they hear what I from Azzah heard, | They'd make
prostration, fearful, at her feet.'

Leave the mention of *him.* Who is at the door?» Quoth 'Adi, «Al-Ahwas al-Ansari.» Cried Omar, «Allah Almighty put him away, and estrange him from His mercy! Is it not he who said, berhyming on a Medinite's slave girl, so that she might outlive her master:—

> Allah be judge betwixt me and her lord | Whoever flies with
> her—and I pursue.'

He shall not come in to me! Who is at the door other than he?» 'Adi replied, «Hammam bin Ghalib al-Farazdak.» And Omar said, «'Tis he who glories in wickedness. . . . He shall not come in to me! Who is at the door other than he?» 'Adi replied, «Al-Akhtal al-Taghlibi.» And Omar said, «He is the [godless] miscreant who saith in his singing:—

> 'Ramazan I ne'er fasted in lifetime; nay | I ate flesh in public
> at undurn day!
> Nor chid I the fair, save in word of love, | Nor seek Meccah's
> plain in salvation-way:
> Nor stand I praying, like rest, who cry, | «Hie salvation-
> wards!» at the dawn's first ray. . . .'

By Allah! he treadeth no carpet of mine. Who is at the door other than he?» Said 'Adi, «Jarir Ibn al-Khatafah.» And Omar cried, «'Tis he who saith:—

> 'But for ill-spying glances, had our eyes espied | Eyes of the
> antelope, and ringlets of the Reems!
> A Huntress of the eyes, by night-time came; and I | cried,
> «Turn in peace! No time for visit this, meseems.»'

But if it must be, and no help, admit Jarir.» So 'Adi went forth and admitted Jarir, who entered saying:—

> 'Yea, He who sent Mohammed unto men | A just successor of
> Islâm assigned.
> His ruth and his justice all mankind embrace | To daunt the
> bad and stablish well-designed.
> Verily now, I look to present good, | for man hath ever tran-
> sient weal in mind.'

Quoth Omar, «O Jarir! keep the fear of Allah before thine eyes, and say naught save the sooth.» And Jarir recited these couplets:—

‹How many widows loose the hair, in far Yamamah land, |
How many an orphan there abides, feeble of voice and eye,
Since faredst thou, who wast to them instead of father lost |
when they like nestled fledglings were, sans power to creep
or fly.
And now we hope — since broke the clouds their word and
troth with us — | Hope from the Caliph's grace to gain a
rain that ne'er shall dry.›

When the Caliph heard this, he said, «By Allah, O Jarir! Omar possesseth but an hundred dirhams. Ho boy! do thou give them to him!» Moreover, he gifted Jarir with the ornaments of his sword; and Jarir went forth to the other poets, who asked him, «What is behind thee?» [What is thy news?»] and he answered, «A man who giveth to the poor, and who denieth the poets; and with him I am well pleased.»

DOMINIQUE FRANÇOIS ARAGO

(1786–1853)

BY EDWARD S. HOLDEN

Dominique François Arago was born February 26th, 1786, near Perpignan, in the Eastern Pyrenees, where his father held the position of Treasurer of the Mint. He entered the École Polytechnique in Paris after a brilliant examination, and held the first places throughout the course. In 1806 he was sent to Valencia in Spain, and to the neighboring island of Iviza, to make the astronomical observations for prolonging the arc of the meridian from Dunkirk southward, in order to supply the basis for the metric system.

Here begin his extraordinary adventures, which are told with inimitable spirit and vigor in his ‹Autobiography.› Arago's work required him to occupy stations on the summits of the highest peaks in the mountains of southeastern Spain. The peasants were densely ignorant and hostile to all foreigners, so that an escort of troops was required in many of his journeys. At some stations he made friends of the bandits of the neighborhood, and carried on his observations under their protection, as it were. In 1807 the tribunal of the Inquisition existed in Valencia; and Arago was witness to the trial and punishment of a pretended sorceress, — and this, as he says, in one of the principal towns of Spain, the seat of a celebrated university. Yet the worst criminals lived unmolested in the cathedrals, for the «right of asylum» was still in force. His geodetic observations were mysteries to the inhabitants, and his signals on the mountain top were believed to be part of the work of a French spy. Just at this time hostilities broke out between France and Spain, and the astronomer was obliged to flee disguised as a Majorcan peasant, carrying his precious papers with him. His knowledge of the Majorcan language saved him, and he reached a Spanish prison with only a slight wound from a dagger. It is the first recorded instance, he says, of a fugitive flying to a dungeon for safety. In this prison, under the care of Spanish officers, Arago found sufficient occupation in calculating observations which he had made; in reading the accounts in the Spanish journals of his own execution at Valencia; and in listening to rumors that it was proposed (by a Spanish monk) to do away with the French prisoner by poisoning his food.

The Spanish officer in charge of the prisoners was induced to connive at the escape of Arago and M. Berthémie (an aide-de-camp of Napoleon); and on the 28th of July, 1808, they stole away from the coast of Spain in a small boat with three sailors, and arrived at Algiers on the 3d of August. Here the French consul procured them two false passports, which transformed the Frenchmen into strolling merchants from Schwekat and Leoben. They boarded an Algerian vessel and set off. Let Arago describe the crew and cargo:—

«The vessel belonged to the Emir of Seca. The commander was a Greek captain named Spiro Calligero. Among the passengers were five members of the family superseded by the Bakri as kings of the Jews; two Maroccan ostrich-feather merchants; Captain Krog from Bergen in Norway; two lions sent by the Dey of Algiers as presents to the Emperor Napoleon; and a great number of monkeys.»

As they entered the Golfe du Lion their ship was captured by a Spanish corsair and taken to Rosas. Worst of all, a former Spanish servant of Arago's—Pablo—was a sailor in the corsair's crew! At Rosas the prisoners were brought before an officer for interrogation. It was now Arago's turn. The officer begins:—

«‹Who are you?›

«‹A poor traveling merchant.›

«‹From whence do you come?›

«‹From a country where you certainly have never been.›

«‹Well—from what country?›

«I feared to answer; for the passports (steeped in vinegar to prevent infection) were in the officer's hands, and I had entirely forgotten whether I was from Schwekat or from Leoben. Finally I answered at a chance, ‹I am from Schwekat;› fortunately this answer agreed with the passport.

«‹You're from Schwekat about as much as I am,› said the officer: ‹you're a Spaniard, and a Spaniard from Valencia to boot, as I can tell by your accent.›

«‹Sir, you are inclined to punish me simply because I have by nature the gift of languages. I readily learn the dialects of the various countries where I carry on my trade. For example, I know the dialect of Iviza.›

«‹Well, I will take you at your word. Here is a soldier who comes from Iviza. Talk to him.›

«‹Very well; I will even sing the goat-song.›

«The verses of this song (if one may call them verses) are separated by the imitated bleatings of the goat. I began at once, with an audacity which even now astonishes me, to intone the song which all the shepherds in Iviza sing:—

Ah graciada Señora,
Una canzo bouil canta,
Bè bè bè bè.
No sera gaiva pulida,
Nosé si vos agradara,
Bè bè bè bè.

«Upon which my Ivizan avouches, in tears, that I am certainly from Iviza. The song had affected him as a Switzer is affected by the ‹Ranz des Vaches.› I then said to the officer that if he would bring to me a person who could speak French, he would find the same embarrassment in this case also. An emigré of the Bourbon regiment comes forward for the new experiment, and after a few phrases affirms without hesitation that I am surely a Frenchman. The officer begins to be impatient.

«‹Have done with these trials: they prove nothing. I require you to tell me who you are.›

«‹My foremost desire is to find an answer which will satisfy you. I am the son of the innkeeper at Mataro.›

«‹I know that man: you are not his son.›

«‹You are right: I told you that I should change my answers till I found one to suit you. I am a marionette player from Lerida.›

«A huge laugh from the crowd which had listened to the interrogatory put an end to the questioning.»

Finally it was necessary for Arago to declare outright that he was French, and to prove it by his old servant Pablo. To supply his immediate wants he sold his watch; and by a series of misadventures this watch subsequently fell into the hands of his family, and he was mourned in France as dead.

After months of captivity the vessel was released, and the prisoner set out for Marseilles. A fearful tempest drove them to the harbor of Bougie, an African port a hundred miles east of Algiers. Thence they made the perilous journey by land to their place of starting, and finally reached Marseilles eleven months after their voyage began. Eleven months to make a journey of four days!

The intelligence of the safe arrival, after so many perils, of the young astronomer, with his packet of precious observations, soon reached Paris. He was welcomed with effusion. Soon afterward (at the age of twenty-three years) he was elected a member of the section of Astronomy of the Academy of Sciences, and from this time forth he led the peaceful life of a savant. He was the Director of the Paris Observatory for many years; the friend of all European scientists; the ardent patron of young men of talent; a leading physicist; a strong Republican, though the friend of Napoleon; and finally the Perpetual Secretary of the Academy.

In the latter capacity it was part of his duty to prepare *éloges* of deceased Academicians. Of his collected works in fourteen volumes, ‹Œuvres de François Arago,› published in Paris, 1865, three volumes are given to these ‹Notices Biographiques.› Here may be found the biographies of Bailly, Sir William Herschel, Laplace, Joseph Fourier, Carnot, Malus, Fresnel, Thomas Young, and James Watt; which, translated rather carelessly into English, have been published under the title ‹Biographies of Distinguished Men,› and can be found in the larger libraries. The collected works contain biographies also of Ampère, Condorcet, Volta, Monge, Porson, Gay-Lussac, besides shorter sketches. They are masterpieces of style and of clear scientific exposition, and full of generous appreciation of others' work. They present in a lucid and popular form the achievements of scientific men whose works have changed the accepted opinion of the world, and they give general views not found in the original writings themselves. Scientific men are usually too much engrossed in advancing science to spare time for expounding it to popular audiences. The talent for such exposition is itself a special one. Arago possessed it to the full, and his own original contributions to astronomy and physics enabled him to speak as an expert, not merely as an expositor.

The extracts are from his admirable estimate of Laplace, which he prepared in connection with the proposal, before him and other members of a State Committee, to publish a new and authoritative edition of the great astronomer's works. The translation is mainly that of the ‹Biographies of Distinguished Men› cited above, and much of the felicity of style is necessarily lost in translation; but the substance of solid and lucid exposition from a master's hand remains.

Arago was a Deputy in 1830, and Minister of War in the Provisional Government of 1848. He died full of honors, October 2d, 1853. Two of his brothers, Jacques and Étienne, were dramatic authors of note. Another, Jean, was a distinguished general in the service of Mexico. One of his sons, Alfred, is favorably known as a painter; another, Emmanuel, as a lawyer, deputy, and diplomat.

Edward S. Holden

LAPLACE

The Marquis de Laplace, peer of France, one of the forty of the French Academy, member of the Academy of Sciences and of the Bureau of Longitude, Associate of all the great Academies or Scientific Societies of Europe, was born at Beaumont-en-Auge, of parents belonging to the class of small farmers, on the 28th of March, 1749; he died on the 5th of March, 1827. The first and second volumes of the 'Mécanique Céleste' [Mechanism of the Heavens] were published in 1799; the third volume appeared in 1802, the fourth in 1805; part of the fifth volume was published in 1823, further books in 1824, and the remainder in 1825. The 'Théorie des Probabilités' was published in 1812. We shall now present the history of the principal astronomical discoveries contained in these immortal works.

Astronomy is the science of which the human mind may justly feel proudest. It owes this pre-eminence to the elevated nature of its object; to the enormous scale of its operations; to the certainty, the utility, and the stupendousness of its results. From the very beginnings of civilization the study of the heavenly bodies and their movements has attracted the attention of governments and peoples. The greatest captains, statesmen, philosophers, and orators of Greece and Rome found it a subject of delight. Yet astronomy worthy of the name is a modern science: it dates from the sixteenth century only. Three great, three brilliant phases have marked its progress. In 1543 the bold and firm hand of Copernicus overthrew the greater part of the venerable scaffolding which had propped the illusions and the pride of many generations. The earth ceased to be the centre, the pivot, of celestial movements. Henceforward it ranged itself modestly among the other planets, its relative importance as one member of the solar system reduced almost to that of a grain of sand.

Twenty-eight years had elapsed from the day when the Canon of Thorn expired while holding in his trembling hands the first copy of the work which was to glorify the name of Poland, when Würtemberg witnessed the birth of a man who was destined to achieve a revolution in science not less fertile in consequences, and still more difficult to accomplish. This man was Kepler. Endowed with two qualities which seem incompatible,—a volcanic imagination, and a dogged pertinacity which the most tedious calculations could not tire,—Kepler conjectured that celestial movements must be connected with each other by simple laws; or, to use his own expression, by harmonic laws. These laws he undertook to discover. A thousand fruitless attempts — the errors of calculation inseparable from a colossal undertaking — did not hinder his resolute advance toward the goal his imagination descried. Twenty-two years he devoted to it, and still he was not weary. What are twenty-two years of labor to him who is about to become the lawgiver of worlds; whose name is to be ineffaceably inscribed on the frontispiece of an immortal code; who can exclaim in dithyrambic language, «The die is cast: I have written my book; it will be read either in the present age or by posterity, it matters not which; it may well await a reader since God has waited six thousand years for an interpreter of his works»?

These celebrated laws, known in astronomy as Kepler's laws, are three in number. The first law is, that the planets describe ellipses around the sun, which is placed in their common focus; the second, that a line joining a planet and the sun sweeps over equal areas in equal times; the third, that the squares of the times of revolution of the planets about the sun are proportional to the cubes of their mean distances from that body. The first two laws were discovered by Kepler in the course of a laborious examination of the theory of the planet Mars. A full account of this inquiry is contained in his famous work, 'De Stella Martis' [Of the Planet Mars], published in 1609. The discovery of the third law was announced to the world in his treatise on Harmonics (1628).

To seek a physical cause adequate to retain the planets in their closed orbits; to make the stability of the universe depend on mechanical forces, and not on solid supports like the crystalline spheres imagined by our ancestors; to extend to the heavenly bodies in their courses the laws of earthly mechanics, — such were the problems which remained for solution after Kepler's discoveries had been announced. Traces of these great problems may be clearly perceived here and there among ancient and modern writers, from Lucretius and Plutarch down to Kepler, Bouillaud, and Borelli. It is to Newton, however, that we must award the merit of their solution. This great man, like several of his predecessors, imagined the celestial bodies to have a tendency to approach each other in virtue of some attractive force, and from the laws of Kepler he deduced the mathematical characteristics of this force. He extended it to all the material molecules of the solar system; and developed his brilliant discovery in a work which, even at the present day, is regarded as the supremest product of the human intellect.

The contributions of France to these revolutions in astronomical science consisted, in 1740, in the determination by experiment of the spheroidal figure of the earth, and in the discovery of the local variations of gravity upon the surface of our planet. These were two great results; but whenever France is not first in science she has lost her place. This rank, lost for a moment, was brilliantly regained by the labors of four geometers. When Newton, giving to his discoveries a generality which the laws of Kepler did not suggest, imagined that the different planets were not only attracted by the sun, but that they also attracted each other, he introduced into the heavens a cause of universal perturbation. Astronomers then saw at a glance that in no part of the universe would the Keplerian laws suffice for the exact representation of the phenomena of motion; that the simple regular movements with which the imaginations of the ancients were pleased to endow the heavenly bodies must experience numerous, considerable, perpetually changing perturbations. To discover a few of these perturbations, and to assign their nature and in a few rare cases their numerical value, was the object which Newton proposed to himself in writing his famous book, the 'Principia Mathematica Philosophiæ Naturalis' [Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy]. Notwithstanding the incomparable sagacity of its author, the 'Principia' contained merely a rough outline of planetary perturbations, though not through any lack of ardor or perseverance. The efforts of the great philosopher were always superhuman, and the questions which he did not solve were simply incapable of solution in his time.

Five geometers — Clairaut, Euler, D'Alembert, Lagrange, and Laplace — shared between them the world whose existence Newton had disclosed. They explored it in all directions, penetrated into regions hitherto inaccessible, and pointed out phenomena hitherto undetected. Finally — and it is this which constitutes their imperishable glory — they brought under the domain of a single principle, a single law, everything that seemed most occult and mysterious in the celestial movements. Geometry had thus the hardihood to dispose of the future, while the centuries as they unroll scrupulously ratify the decisions of science.

If Newton gave a complete solution of celestial movements where but two bodies attract each other, he did not even attempt the infinitely more difficult problem of three. The «problem of three bodies» (this is the name by which it has become celebrated) — the problem of determining the movement of a body subjected to the attractive influence of two others — was solved for the first time by our countryman, Clairaut. Though he enumerated the various forces which must result from the mutual action of the planets and satellites of our system, even the great Newton did not venture to investigate the general nature of their effects. In the midst of the labyrinth formed by increments and diminutions of velocity, variations in the forms of orbits, changes in distances and inclinations, which these forces must evidently produce, the most learned geometer would fail to discover a trustworthy guide. Forces so numerous, so variable in direction, so different in intensity, seemed to be incapable of maintaining a condition of equilibrium except by a sort of miracle. Newton even suggested that the planetary system did not contain within itself the elements of indefinite stability. He was of opinion that a powerful hand must intervene from time to time to repair the derangements occasioned by the mutual action of the various bodies. Euler, better instructed than Newton in a knowledge of these perturbations, also refused to admit that the solar system was constituted so as to endure forever.

Never did a greater philosophical question offer itself to the inquiries of mankind. Laplace attacked it with boldness, perseverance, and success. The profound and long-continued researches of the illustrious geometer completely established the perpetual variability of the planetary ellipses. He demonstrated that the extremities of their major axes make the circuit of the heavens; that independent of oscillation, the planes of their orbits undergo displacements by which their intersections with the plane of the terrestrial orbit are each year directed toward different stars. But in the midst of this apparant chaos, there is one element which remains constant, or is merely subject to small and periodic changes; namely, the major axis of each orbit, and consequently the time of revolution of each planet. This is the element which ought to have varied most, on the principles held by Newton and Euler. Gravitation, then, suffices to preserve the stability of the solar system. It maintains the forms and inclinations of the orbits in an average position, subject to slight oscillations only; variety does not entail disorder; the universe offers an example of harmonious relations, of a state of perfection which Newton himself doubted.

This condition of harmony depends on circumstances disclosed to Laplace by analysis; circumstances which on the surface do not seem capable of exercising so great an influence. If instead of planets all revolving in the same direction, in orbits but slightly eccentric and in planes inclined at but small angles toward each other, we should substitute different conditions, the stability of the universe would be jeopardized, and a frightful chaos would pretty certainly result. The discovery of the actual conditions excluded the idea, at least so far as the solar system was concerned, that the Newtonian attraction might be a cause of disorder. But might not other forces, combined with the attraction of gravitation, produce gradually increasing perturbations such as Newton and Euler feared? Known facts seemed to justify the apprehension. A comparison of ancient with modern observations revealed a continual acceleration in the mean motions of the moon and of Jupiter, and an equally striking diminution of the mean motion of Saturn. These variations led to a very important conclusion. In accordance with their presumed cause, to say that the velocity of a body increased from century to century was equivalent to asserting that the body continually approached the centre of motion; on the other hand, when the velocity diminished, the body must be receding from the centre. Thus, by a strange ordering of nature, our planetary system seemed destined to lose Saturn, its most mysterious ornament; to see the planet with its ring and seven satellites plunge gradually into those unknown regions where the eye armed with the most powerful telescope has never penetrated. Jupiter, on the other hand, the planet compared with which the earth is so insignificant, appeared to be moving in the opposite direction, so that it would ultimately be absorbed into the incandescent matter of the sun. Finally, it seemed that the moon would one day precipitate itself upon the earth.

There was nothing doubtful or speculative in these sinister forebodings. The precise dates of the approaching catastrophes were alone uncertain. It was known, however, that they were very distant. Accordingly, neither the learned dissertations of men of science nor the animated descriptions of certain poets produced any impression upon the public mind. The members of our scientific societies, however, believed with regret the approaching destruction of the planetary system. The Academy of Sciences called the attention of geometers of all countries to these menacing perturbations. Euler and Lagrange descended into the arena. Never did their mathematical genius shine with a brighter lustre. Still the question remained undecided, when from two obscure corners of the theories of analysis, Laplace, the author of the 'Mécanique Céleste,' brought the laws of these great phenomena clearly to light. The variations in velocity of Jupiter, Saturn, and the moon, were proved to flow from evident physical causes, and to belong in the category of ordinary periodic perturbations depending solely on gravitation. These dreaded variations in orbital dimensions resolved themselves into simple oscillations included within narrow limits. In a word, by the powerful instrumentality of mathematical analysis, the physical universe was again established on a demonstrably firm foundation.

Having demonstrated the smallness of these periodic oscillations, Laplace next succeeded in determining the absolute dimensions of the orbits. What is the distance of the sun from the earth? No scientific question has occupied the attention of mankind in a greater degree. Mathematically speaking, nothing is more simple: it suffices, as in ordinary surveying, to draw visual lines from the two extremities of a known base line to an inaccessible object; the remainder of the process is an elementary calculation. Unfortunately, in the case of the sun, the distance is very great and the base lines which can be measured upon the earth are comparatively very small. In such a case, the slightest errors in the direction of visual lines exercise an enormous influence upon the results. In the beginning of the last century, Halley had remarked that certain interpositions of Venus between the earth and the sun — or to use the common term, the transits of the planet across the sun's disk — would furnish at each observing station an indirect means of fixing the position of the visual ray much superior in accuracy to the most perfect direct measures. Such was the object of the many scientific expeditions undertaken in 1761 and 1769, years in which the transits of Venus occurred. A comparison of observations made in the Southern Hemisphere with those of Europe gave for the distance of the sun the result which has since figured in all treatises on astronomy and navigation. No government hesitated to furnish scientific academies with the means, however expensive, of establishing their observers in the most distant regions. We have already remarked that this determination seemed imperiously to demand an extensive base, for small bases would have been totally inadequate. Well, Laplace has solved the problem without a base of any kind whatever; he has deduced the distance of the sun from observations of the moon made in one and the same place.

The sun is, with respect to our satellite the moon, the cause of perturbations which evidently depend on the distance of the immense luminous globe from the earth. Who does not see that these perturbations must diminish if the distance increases, and increase if the distance diminishes, so that the distance determines the amount of the perturbations? Observation assigns the numerical value of these perturbations; theory, on the other hand, unfolds the general mathematical relation which connects them with the solar distance and with other known elements. The determination of the mean radius of the terrestrial orbit — of the distance of the sun — then becomes one of the most simple operations of algebra. Such is the happy combination by the aid of which Laplace has solved the great, the celebrated problem of parallax. It is thus that the illustrious geometer found for the mean distance of the sun from the earth, expressed in radii of the terrestrial orbit, a value differing but slightly from that which was the fruit of so many troublesome and expensive voyages.

The movements of the moon proved a fertile mine of research to our great geometer. His penetrating intellect discovered in them unknown treasures. With an ability and a perseverance equally worthy of admiration, he separated these treasures from the coverings which had hitherto concealed them from vulgar eyes. For example, the earth governs the movements of the moon. The earth is flattened; in other words, its figure is spheroidal. A spheroidal body does not attract as does a sphere. There should then exist in the movement — I had almost said in the countenance — of the moon a sort of impress of the spheroidal figure of the earth. Such was the idea as it originally occurred to Laplace. By means of a minutely careful investigation, he discovered in its motion two well-defined perturbations, each depending on the spheroidal figure of the earth. When these were submitted to calculation, each led to the same value of the ellipticity. It must be recollected that the ellipticity thus derived from the motions of the moon is not the one corresponding to such or such a country, to the ellipticity observed in France, in England, in Italy, in Lapland, in North America, in India, or in the region of the Cape of Good Hope; for, the earth's crust having undergone considerable upheavals at different times and places, the primitive regularity of its curvature has been sensibly disturbed thereby. The moon (and it is this which renders the result of such inestimable value) ought to assign, and has in reality assigned, the general ellipticity of the earth; in other words, it has indicated a sort of average value of the various determinations obtained at enormous expense, and with infinite labor, as the result of long voyages undertaken by astronomers of all the countries of Europe.

Certain remarks of Laplace himself bring into strong relief the profound, the unexpected, the almost paradoxical character of the methods I have attempted to sketch. What are the elements it has been found necessary to confront with each other in order to arrive at results expressed with such extreme precision? On the one hand, mathematical formulæ deduced from the principle of universal gravitation; on the other, certain irregularities observed in the returns of the moon to the meridian. An observing geometer, who from his infancy had never quitted his study, and who had never viewed the heavens except through a narrow aperture directed north and south, — to whom nothing had ever been revealed respecting the bodies revolving above his head, except that they attract each other according to the Newtonian law of gravitation, — would still perceive that his narrow abode was situated upon the surface of a spheroidal body, whose equatorial axis was greater than its polar by a three hundred and sixth part. In his isolated, fixed position he could still deduce his true distance from the sun!

Laplace's improvement of the lunar tables not only promoted maritime intercourse between distant countries, but preserved the lives of mariners. Thanks to an unparalleled sagacity, to a limitless perseverance, to an ever youthful and communicable ardor, Laplace solved the celebrated problem of the longitude with a precision even greater than the utmost needs of the art of navigation demanded. The ship, the sport of the winds and tempests, no longer fears to lose its way in the immensity of the ocean. In every place and at every time the pilot reads in the starry heavens his distance from the meridian of Paris. The extreme perfection of these tables of the moon places Laplace in the ranks of the world's benefactors.

In the beginning of the year 1611, Galileo supposed that he found in the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites a simple and rigorous solution of the famous problem of the longitude, and attempts to introduce the new method on board the numerous vessels of Spain and Holland at once began. They failed because the necessary observations required powerful telescopes, which could not be employed on a tossing ship. Even the expectations of the serviceability of Galileo's methods for land calculations proved premature. The movements of the satellites of Jupiter are far less simple than the immortal Italian supposed them to be. The labors of three more generations of astronomers and mathematicians were needed to determine them, and the mathematical genius of Laplace was needed to complete their labors. At the present day the nautical ephemerides contain, several years in advance, the indications of the times of the eclipses and reappearances of Jupiter's satellites. Calculation is as precise as direct observation.

Influenced by an exaggerated deference, modesty, timidity, France in the eighteenth century surrendered to England the exclusive privilege of constructing her astronomical instruments. Thus, when Herschel was prosecuting his beautiful observations on the other side of the Channel, we had not even the means of verifying them. Fortunately for the scientific honor of our country, mathematical analysis also is a powerful instrument. The great Laplace, from the retirement of his study, foresaw, and accurately predicted in advance, what the excellent astronomer of Windsor would soon behold with the largest telescopes existing. When, in 1610, Galileo directed toward Saturn a lens of very low power which he had just constructed with his own hands, although he perceived that the planet was not a globe, he could not ascertain its real form. The expression «tricorporate,» by which the illustrious Florentine designated the appearance of the planet, even implied a totally erroneous idea of its structure. At the present day every one knows that Saturn consists of a globe about nine hundred times greater than the earth, and of a ring. This ring does not touch the ball of the planet, being everywhere removed from it to a distance of twenty thousand (English) miles. Observation indicates the breadth of the ring to be fifty-four thousand miles. The thickness certainly does not exceed two hundred and fifty miles. With the exception of a black streak which divides the ring throughout its whole contour into two parts of unequal breadth and of different brightness, this strange colossal bridge without foundations had never offered to the most experienced or skillful observers either spot or protuberance adapted for deciding whether it was immovable or endowed with a motion of rotation. Laplace considered it to be very improbable, if the ring was stationary, that its constituent parts should be capable of resisting by mere cohesion the continual attraction of the planet. A movement of rotation occurred to his mind as constituting the principle of stability, and he deduced the necessary velocity from this consideration. The velocity thus found was exactly equal to that which Herschel subsequently derived from a series of extremely delicate observations. The two parts of the ring, being at different distances from the planet, could not fail to be given different movements of precession by the action of the sun. Hence it would seem that the planes of both rings ought in general to be inclined toward each other, whereas they appear from observation always to coincide. It was necessary then that some physical cause capable of neutralizing the action of the sun should exist. In a memoir published in February, 1789, Laplace found that this cause depended on the ellipticity of Saturn produced by a rapid movement of rotation of the planet, a movement whose discovery Herschel announced in November of the same year.

If we descend from the heavens to the earth, the discoveries of Laplace will appear not less worthy of his genius. He reduced the phenomena of the tides, which an ancient philosopher termed in despair "the tomb of human curiosity," to an analytical theory in which the physical conditions of the question figure for the first time. Consequently, to the immense advantage of coast navigation, calculators now venture to predict in detail the time and height of the tides several years in advance. Between the phenomena of the ebb and flow, and the attractive forces of the sun and moon upon the fluid sheet which covers three fourths of the globe, an intimate and necessary connection exists; a connection from which Laplace deduced the value of the mass of our satellite the moon. Yet so late as the year 1631 the illustrious Galileo, as appears from his 'Dialogues,' was so far from perceiving the mathematical relations from which Laplace deduced results so beautiful, so unequivocal, and so useful, that he taxed with frivolousness the vague idea which Kepler entertained of attributing to the moon's attraction a certain share in the production of the diurnal and periodical movements of the waters of the ocean.

Laplace did not confine his genius to the extension and improvement of the mathematical theory of the tide. He considered the phenomenon from an entirely new point of view, and it was he who first treated of the stability of the ocean. He has established its equilibrium, but upon the express condition (which, however, has been amply proved to exist) that the mean density of the fluid mass is less than the mean density of the earth. Everything else remaining the same, if we substituted an ocean of quicksilver for the actual ocean, this stability would disappear. The fluid would frequently overflow its boundaries, to ravage continents even to the height of the snowy peaks which lose themselves in the clouds.

No one was more sagacious than Laplace in discovering intimate relations between phenomena apparently unrelated, or more skillful in deducing important conclusions from such unexpected affinities. For example, toward the close of his days, with the aid of certain lunar observations, with a stroke of his pen he overthrew the cosmogonic theories of Buffon and Bailly, which were so long in favor. According to these theories, the earth was hastening to a state of congelation which was close at hand. Laplace, never contented with vague statements, sought to determine in numbers the rate of the rapid cooling of our globe which Buffon had so eloquently but so gratuitously announced. Nothing could be more simple, better connected, or more conclusive than the chain of deductions of the celebrated geometer. A body diminishes in volume when it cools. According to the most elementary principles of mechanics, a rotating body which contracts in dimensions must inevitably turn upon its axis with greater and greater rapidity. The length of the day has been determined in all ages by the time of the earth's rotation; if the earth is cooling, the length of the day must be continually shortening. Now, there exists a means of ascertaining whether the length of the day has undergone any variation; this consists in examining, for each century, the arc of the celestial sphere described by the moon during the interval of time which the astronomers of the existing epoch call a day; in other words, the time required by the earth to effect a complete rotation on its axis, the velocity of the moon being in fact independent of the time of the earth's rotation. Let us now, following Laplace, take from the standard tables the smallest values, if you choose, of the expansions or contractions which solid bodies experience from changes of temperature; let us search the annals of Grecian, Arabian, and modern astronomy for the purpose of finding in them the angular velocity of the moon: and the great geometer will prove, by incontrovertible evidence founded upon these data, that during a period of two thousand years the mean temperature of the earth has not varied to the extent of the hundredth part of a degree of the centigrade thermometer. Eloquence cannot resist such a process of reasoning, or withstand the force of such figures. Mathematics has ever been the implacable foe of scientific romances. The constant object of Laplace was the explanation of the great phenomena of nature according to inflexible principles of mathematical analysis. No philosopher, no mathematician, could have guarded himself more cautiously against a propensity to hasty speculation. No person dreaded more the scientific errors which cajole the imagination when it passes the boundary of fact, calculation, and analogy.

Once, and once only, did Laplace launch forward, like Kepler, like Descartes, like Leibnitz, like Buffon, into the region of conjectures. But then his conception was nothing less than a complete cosmogony. All the planets revolve around the sun, from west to east, and in planes only slightly inclined to each other. The satellites revolve around their respective primaries in the same direction. Both planets and satellites, having a rotary motion, turn also upon their axes from west to east. Finally, the rotation of the sun also is directed from west to east. Here, then, is an assemblage of forty-three movements, all operating alike. By the calculus of probabilities, the odds are four thousand millions to one that this coincidence in direction is not the effect of accident.

It was Buffon, I think, who first attempted to explain this singular feature of our solar system. « Wishing, in the explanation of phenomena, to avoid recourse to causes which are not to be found in nature,» the celebrated academician sought for a physical cause for what is common to the movements of so many bodies differing as they do in magnitude, in form, and in their distances from the centre of attraction. He imagined that he had discovered such a physical cause by making this triple supposition: a comet fell obliquely upon the sun; it pushed before it a torrent of fluid matter; this substance, transported to a greater or less distance from the sun according to its density, formed by condensation all the known planets. The bold hypothesis is subject to insurmountable difficulties. I proceed to indicate, in a few words, the cosmogonic system which Laplace substituted for it.

According to Laplace, the sun was, at a remote epoch, the central nucleus of an immense nebula, which possessed a very high temperature, and extended far beyond the region in which Uranus now revolves. No planet was then in existence. The solar nebula was endowed with a general movement of rotation in the direction west to east. As it cooled it could not fail to experience a gradual condensation, and in consequence to rotate with greater and greater rapidity. If the nebulous matter extended originally in the plane of its equator, as far as the limit where the centrifugal force exactly counterbalanced the attraction of the nucleus, the molecules situate at this limit ought, during the process of condensation, to separate from the rest of the atmospheric matter and to form an equatorial zone, a ring, revolving separately and with its primitive velocity. We may conceive that analogous separations were effected in the remoter strata of the nebula at different epochs and at different distances from the nucleus, and that they gave rise to a succession of distinct rings, all lying in nearly the same plane, and all endowed with different velocities.

This being once admitted, it is easy to see that the permanent stability of the rings would have required a regularity of structure throughout their whole contour, which is very improbable. Each of them, accordingly, broke in its turn into several masses, which were obviously endowed with a movement of rotation coinciding in direction with the common movement of revolution, and which, in consequence of their fluidity, assumed spheroidal forms. In order, next, that one of those spheroids may absorb all the others belonging to the same ring, it is sufficient to suppose it to have a mass greater than that of any other spheroid of its group.

Each of the planets, while in this vaporous condition to which we have just alluded, would manifestly have a central nucleus, gradually increasing in magnitude and mass, and an atmosphere offering, at its successive limits, phenomena entirely similar to those which the solar atmosphere, properly so called, had exhibited. We are here contemplating the birth of satellites and the birth of the ring of Saturn.

The Nebular Hypothesis, of which I have just given an imperfect sketch, has for its object to show how a nebula endowed with a general movement of rotation must eventually transform itself into a very luminous central nucleus (a sun), and into a series of distinct spheroidal planets, situate at considerable distances from one another, all revolving around the central sun, in the direction of the original movement of the nebula; how these planets ought also to have movements of rotation in similar directions; how, finally, the satellites, when any such are formed, must revolve upon their axes and around their respective primaries, in the direction of rotation of the planets and of their movement of revolution around the sun.

In all that precedes, attention has been concentrated upon the 'Mécanique Céleste.' The 'Système du Monde' and the 'Théorie Analytique des Probabilités' also deserve description.

The Exposition of the System of the World is the 'Mécanique Céleste' divested of that great apparatus of analytical formulæ which must be attentively perused by every astronomer who, to use an expression of Plato, wishes to know the numbers which govern the physical universe. It is from this work that persons ignorant of mathematics may obtain competent knowledge of the methods to which physical astronomy owes its astonishing progress. Written with a noble simplicity of style, an exquisite exactness of expression, and a scrupulous accuracy, it is universally conceded to stand among the noblest monuments of French literature. . . . The labors of all ages to persuade truth from the heavens are there justly, clearly, and profoundly analyzed. Genius presides as the impartial judge of genius. Throughout his work Laplace remained at the height of his great mission. It will be read with respect so long as the torch of science illuminates the world.

The calculus of probabilities, when confined within just limits, concerns the mathematician, the experimenter, and the statesman. From the time when Pascal and Fermat established its first principles, it has rendered most important daily services. This it is which, after suggesting the best form for statistical tables of population and mortality, teaches us to deduce from those numbers, so often misinterpreted, the most precise and useful conclusions. This it is which alone regulates with equity insurance premiums, pension funds, annuities, discounts, etc. This it is that has gradually suppressed lotteries, and other shameful snares cunningly laid for avarice and ignorance. Laplace has treated these questions with his accustomed superiority: the ‘Analytical Theory of Probabilities’ is worthy of the author of the ‘Mécanique Céleste.’

A philosopher whose name is associated with immortal discoveries said to his too conservative audience, “Bear in mind, gentlemen, that in questions of science the authority of a thousand is not worth the humble reasoning of a single individual.” Two centuries have passed over these words of Galileo without lessening their value or impugning their truth. For this reason, it has been thought better rather to glance briefly at the work of Laplace than to repeat the eulogies of his admirers.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT

(1667–1735)

ARBUTHNOT'S place in literature depends as much on his association with the wits of his day as on his own satirical and humorous productions. Many of these have been published in the collections of Swift, Gay, Pope, and others, and cannot be identified. The task of verifying them is rendered more difficult by the fact that his son repudiated a collection claiming to be his ‘Miscellaneous Works,’ published in 1750.

JOHN ARBUTHNOT

John Arbuthnot was born in the manse near Arbuthnot Castle, Kincardineshire, Scotland, April 29th, 1667. He was the son of a Scotch Episcopal clergyman, who was soon to be dispossessed of his parish by the Presbyterians in the Revolution of 1688. His children, who shared his Jacobite sentiments, were forced to leave Scotland; and John, after finishing his university course at Aberdeen, and taking his medical degree at St. Andrews, went to London and taught mathematics. He soon attracted attention by a keen and satirical ‘Examination of Dr. Woodward's Account of the Deluge,’ published in 1697. By a fortunate chance he was called to attend the Prince Consort (Prince George of Denmark), and in 1705 was made Physician Extraordinary to Queen Anne. If we may believe Swift, the agreeable Scotchman at once became her favorite attendant. His position at court was strengthened by his friendships with the great Tory statesmen.

Arbuthnot's best remembered work is 'The History of John Bull'; not because many people read or will ever read the book itself, but because it fixed a typical name and a typical character ineffaceably in the popular fancy and memory. He is credited with having been the first to use this famous sobriquet for the English nation; he was certainly the first to make it universal, and the first to make that burly, choleric, gross-feeding, hard-drinking, blunt-spoken, rather stupid and decidedly gullible, but honest and straightforward character one of the stock types of the world. The book appeared as four separate pamplets: the first being entitled 'Law is a Bottomless Pit, Exemplified in the Case of Lord Strutt, John Bull, Nicholas Frog, and Lewis Baboon, Who Spent All They Had in a Law Suit'; the second, 'John Bull in His Senses'; the third, 'John Bull Still in His Senses'; and the fourth, 'Lewis Baboon Turned Honest, and John Bull Politician.' Published in 1712, these were at once attributed to Swift. But Pope says, «Dr. Arbuthnot was the sole writer of 'John Bull'»; and Swift gives us still more conclusive evidence by writing, «I hope you read 'John Bull.' It was a Scotch gentleman, a friend of mine, that writ it; but they put it on to me.» In his humorous preface Dr. Arbuthnot says:—

> «When I was first called to the office of historiographer to John Bull, he expressed himself to this purpose:—'Sir Humphrey Polesworth, I know you are a plain dealer; it is for that reason I have chosen you for this important trust; speak the truth, and spare not.' That I might fulfill those, his honorable intentions, I obtained leave to repair to and attend him in his most secret retirements; and I put the journals of all transactions into a strong box to be opened at a fitting occasion, after the manner of the historiographers of some Eastern monarchs. . . . And now, that posterity may not be ignorant in what age so excellent a history was written (which would otherwise, no doubt, be the subject of its inquiries), I think it proper to inform the learned of future times that it was compiled when Louis XIV. was King of France, and Philip, his grandson, of Spain; when England and Holland, in conjunction with the Emperor and the allies, entered into a war against these two princes, which lasted ten years, under the management of the Duke of Marlborough, and was put to a conclusion by the treaty of Utrecht under the ministry of the Earl of Oxford, in the year 1713.»

The characters disguised are: «John Bull,» the English; «Nicholas Frog,» the Dutch; «Lewis Baboon,» the French king; «Lord Strutt,» the late King of Spain; «Philip Baboon,» the Duke of Anjou; «Esquire South,» the King of Spain; «Humphrey Hocus,» the Duke of Marlborough; and «Sir Roger Bold,» the Earl of Oxford. The lawsuit was the War of the Spanish Succession; John Bull's first wife was the late ministry; and his second wife the Tory ministry. To explain the allegory further, John Bull's mother was the Church of England; his sister Peg, the Scotch nation; and her lover Jack, Presbyterianism.

That so witty a work, so strong in typical freehand character-drawing of permanent validity and remembrance, should be unread and its author forgotten except by scholars, is too curious a fact not to have a deep cause in its own character. The cause is not hard to find: it is one of the books which try to turn the world's current backward, and which the world dislikes as offending its ideals of progress. Stripped of its broad humor, its object, rubbed in with no great delicacy of touch, was to uphold the most extreme and reactionary Toryism of the time, and to jeer at political liberalism from the ground up. Its theoretic loyalty is the non-resistant Jacobitism of the Nonjurors, which it is so hard for us now to distinguish from abject slavishness; though like the principles of the casuists, one must not confound theory with practice. It seems the loyalty of a mujik or a Fiji dressed in cultivated modern clothes, not that of a conceivable cultivated modern community as a whole; but it would be very Philistine to pour wholesale contempt on a creed held by so many large minds and souls. It was of course produced by the experience of what the reverse tenets had brought on,—a long civil war, years of military despotism, and immense social and moral disorganization. In 'John Bull,' the fidelity of a subject to a king is made exactly correspondent, both in theory and practice, with the fidelity of a wife to her husband and her marriage vows; and an elaborate parallel is worked out to show that advocating the right of resistance to a bad king is precisely the same, on grounds of either logic or Scripture, as advocating the right of adultery toward a bad husband. This is not even good fooling; and, its local use past and no longer buoyed by personal liking for the author, the book sinks back into the limbo of partisan polemics with many worse ones and perhaps some better ones, dragging its real excellences down with it.

In 1714 the famous Scriblerus Club was organized, having for its members Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Gay, Congreve, Lord Oxford, and Bishop Atterbury. They agreed to write a series of papers ridiculing, in the words of Pope, "all the false tastes in learning, under the character of a man of capacity enough, but that had dipped into every art and science, but injudiciously in each." The chronicle of this club was found in 'The Memoirs of the Extraordinary Life, Works, and Discoveries of Martinus Scriblerus,' which is thought to have been written entirely by Arbuthnot, and which describes the education of a learned pedant's son. Its humor may be appreciated by means of the citation given below. The first book of 'Scriblerus' appeared six years after Arbuthnot's death, when it was included in the second volume of Alexander Pope's works (1741). Pope said that from the 'Memoirs of Scriblerus' Swift took his idea of 'Gulliver'; and the Dean himself writes to Arbuthnot, July 3d, 1714:—

> «To talk of 'Martin' in any hands but Yours is a Folly. You every day give better hints than all of us together could do in a twelvemonth. And to say the truth, Pope, who first thought of the Hint, has no Genius at all to it, in my mind; Gay is too young; Parnell has some ideas of it, but is idle; I could put together, and lard, and strike out well enough, but all that relates to the Sciences must be from you.»

Swift's opinion that Arbuthnot «has more wit than we all have, and his humanity is equal to his wit,» seems to have been the universal dictum; and Pope honored him by publishing a dialogue in the 'Prologue to the Satires,' known first as 'The Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot,' which contains many affectionate personal allusions. Aitken says, in his biography:—

> «Arbuthnot's attachment to Swift and Pope was of the most intimate nature, and those who knew them best maintained that he was their equal at least in gifts. He understood Swift's cynicism, and their correspondence shows the unequaled sympathy that existed between the two. Gay, Congreve, Berkeley, Parnell, were among Arbuthnot's constant friends, and all of them were indebted to him for kindnesses freely rendered. He was on terms of intimacy with Bolingbroke and Oxford, Chesterfield, Peterborough, and Pulteney; and among the ladies with whom he mixed were Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Lady Betty Germain, Mrs. Howard, Lady Masham, and Mrs. Martha Blount. He was, too, the trusted friend and physician of Queen Anne. Most of the eminent men of science of the time, including some who were opposed to him in politics, were in frequent intercourse with him; and it is pleasant to know that at least one of the greatest of the wits who were most closely allied to the Whig party—Addison—had friendly relations with him.»

From the letters of Lord Chesterfield we learn that

> «His imagination was almost inexhaustible, and whatever subject he treated, or was consulted upon, he immediately overflowed with all that it could possibly produce. It was at anybody's service, for as soon as he was exonerated he did not care what became of it; insomuch that his sons, when young, have frequently made kites of his scattered papers of hints, which would have furnished good matter for folios. Not being in the least jealous of his fame as an author, he would neither take the time nor the trouble of separating the best from the worst; he worked out the whole mine, which afterward, in the hands of skillful refiners, produced a rich vein of ore. As his imagination was always at work, he was frequently absent and inattentive in company, which made him both say and do a thousand inoffensive absurdities; but which, far from being provoking, as they commonly are, supplied new matter for conversation, and occasioned wit both in himself and others.»

Speaking to Boswell of the writers of Queen Anne's time, Dr. Johnson said, «I think Dr. Arbuthnot the first man among them. He was the most universal genius, being an excellent physician, a man of deep learning, and a man of much humor.» He did not, however, think much of the ‹Scriblerus› papers, and said they were forgotten because «no man would be the wiser, better, or merrier for remembering them»; which is hard measure for the wit and divertingness of some of the travesties. Cowper, reviewing Johnson's ‹Lives of the Poets,› declared that «one might search these eight volumes with a candle to find a man, and not find one, unless perhaps Arbuthnot were he.» Thackeray, too, called him «one of the wisest, wittiest, most accomplished, gentlest of mankind.»

Thus fortunate in his sunny spirit, in his genius for friendship, in his professional eminence, and in his literary capacity, Dr. Arbuthnot saw his life flow smoothly to its close. He died in London on February 27th, 1735, at the age of sixty eight, still working and playing with youthful ardor, and still surrounded with all the good things of life.

THE TRUE CHARACTERS OF JOHN BULL, NIC. FROG, AND HOCUS

From ‹The History of John Bull,› Part I.

For the better understanding the following history, the reader ought to know that Bull, in the main, was an honest, plain-dealing fellow, choleric, bold, and of a very unconstant temper; he dreaded not old Lewis either at backsword, single falchion, or cudgel play; but then he was very apt to quarrel with his best friends, especially if they pretended to govern him. If you flattered him, you might lead him like a child. John's temper depended very much upon the air; his spirits rose and fell with the weather-glass. John was quick and understood his business very well; but no man alive was more careless in looking into his accounts, or more cheated by partners, apprentices, and servants. This was occasioned by his being a boon companion, loving his bottle and his diversion; for, to say truth, no man kept a better house than John, nor spent his money more generously. By plain and fair dealing John had acquired some plums, and might have kept them, had it not been for his unhappy lawsuit.

Nic. Frog was a cunning, sly fellow, quite the reverse of John in many particulars; covetous, frugal, minded domestic affairs, would pinch his belly to save his pocket, never lost a farthing by careless servants or bad debtors. He did not care much for any sort of diversion, except tricks of High German artists and legerdemain. No man exceeded Nic. in these; yet it must be owned that Nic. was a fair dealer, and in that way acquired immense riches.

Hocus was an old, cunning attorney; and though this was the first considerable suit that ever he was engaged in, he showed himself superior in address to most of his profession. He kept always good clerks, he loved money, was smooth-tongued, gave good words, and seldom lost his temper. He was not worse than an infidel, for he provided plentifully for his family, but he loved himself better than them all. The neighbors reported that he was henpecked, which was impossible, by such a mild-spirited woman as his wife was.

HOW THE RELATIONS RECONCILED JOHN AND HIS SISTER PEG, AND WHAT RETURN PEG MADE TO JOHN'S MESSAGE

From the ‹History of John Bull,› Part I.

John Bull, otherwise a good-natured man, was very hard-hearted to his sister Peg, chiefly from an aversion he had conceived in his infancy. While he flourished, kept a warm house, and drove a plentiful trade, poor Peg was forced to go hawking and peddling about the streets selling knives, scissors, and shoe-buckles; now and then carried a basket of fish to the market; sewed, spun, and knit for a livelihood till her fingers' ends were sore: and when she could not get bread for her family, she was forced to hire them out at journey-work to her neighbors. Yet in these, her poor circumstances, she still preserved the air and mien of a gentlewoman—a certain decent pride that extorted respect from the haughtiest of her neighbors. When she came in to any full assembly, she would not yield the *pas* to the best of them. If one asked her, «Are you not related to John Bull?» «Yes,» says she, «he has the honor to be my brother.» So Peg's affairs went till all the relations cried out shame upon John for his barbarous usage of his own flesh and blood; that it was an easy matter for him to put her in a creditable way of living, not only without hurt, but with advantage to himself, seeing she was an industrious person, and might be serviceable to him in his way of business. «Hang her, jade,» quoth John, «I can't endure her as long as she keeps that rascal Jack's company.» They told him the way to reclaim her was to take her into his house; that by conversation the childish humors of their younger days might be worn out.

These arguments were enforced by a certain incident. It happened that John was at that time about making his will and entailing his estate, the very same in which Nic. Frog is named executor. Now, his sister Peg's name being in the entail, he could not make a thorough settlement without her consent. There was indeed a malicious story went about, as if John's last wife had fallen in love with Jack as he was eating custard on horseback; that she persuaded John to take his sister into the house the better to drive on the intrigue with Jack, concluding he would follow his mistress Peg. All I can infer from this story is that when one has got a bad character in the world, people will report and believe anything of them, true or false. But to return to my story.

When Peg received John's message she huffed and stormed:—«My brother John,» quoth she, «is grown wondrous kind-hearted all of a sudden, but I meikle doubt whether it be not mair for their own conveniency than for my good; he draws up his writs and his deeds, forsooth, and I must set my hand to them, unsight, unseen. I like the young man he has settled upon well enough, but I think I ought to have a valuable consideration for my consent. He wants my poor little farm because it makes a nook in his park wall. You may e'en tell him he has mair than he makes good use of; he gangs up and down drinking, roaring, and quarreling, through all the country markets, making foolish bargains in his cups, which he repents when he is sober; like a thriftless wretch, spending the goods and gear that his forefathers won with the sweat of their brows; light come, light go; he cares not a farthing. But why should I stand surety for his contracts? The little I have is free, and I can call it my own—hame's hame, let it be never so hamely. I ken well enough, he could never abide me, and when he has his ends he'll e'en use me as he did before. I'm sure I shall be treated like a poor drudge—I shall be set to tend the bairns, darn the hose, and mend the linen. Then there's no living with that old carline, his mother; she rails at Jack, and Jack's an honester man than any of her kin: I shall be plagued with her spells and her

Paternosters, and silly Old World ceremonies; I mun never pare my nails on a Friday, nor begin a journey on Childermas Day; and I mun stand becking and binging as I gang out and into the hall. Tell him he may e'en gang his get; I'll have nothing to do with him; I'll stay like the poor country mouse, in my awn habitation."

So Peg talked; but for all that, by the interposition of good friends, and by many a bonny thing that was sent, and many more that were promised Peg, the matter was concluded, and Peg taken into the house upon certain articles [the Act of Toleration is referred to]; one of which was that she might have the freedom of Jack's conversation, and might take him for better or for worse if she pleased; provided always he did not come into the house at unseasonable hours and disturb the rest of the old woman, John's mother.

OF THE RUDIMENTS OF MARTIN'S LEARNING

From 'Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus'

Mrs. Scriblerus considered it was now time to instruct him in the fundamentals of religion, and to that end took no small pains in teaching him his catechism. But Cornelius looked upon this as a tedious way of instruction, and therefore employed his head to find out more pleasing methods, the better to induce him to be fond of learning. He would frequently carry him to the puppet-show of the creation of the world, where the child, with exceeding delight, gained a notion of the history of the Bible. His first rudiments in profane history were acquired by seeing of raree-shows, where he was brought acquainted with all the princes of Europe. In short, the old gentleman so contrived it to make everything contribute to the improvement of his knowledge, even to his very dress. He invented for him a geographical suit of clothes, which might give him some hints of that science, and likewise some knowledge of the commerce of different nations. He had a French hat with an African feather, Holland shirts, Flanders lace, English clothes lined with Indian silk, his gloves were Italian, and his shoes were Spanish: he was made to observe this, and daily catechized thereupon, which his father was wont to call "traveling at home." He never gave him a fig or an orange but he obliged him to give an account from what country it came. In natural history he was much assisted by his curiosity in sign-posts; insomuch that he hath often confessed he owed to them the knowledge of many creatures which he never found since in any author, such as white lions, golden dragons, etc. He once thought the same of green men, but had since found them mentioned by Kercherus, and verified in the history of William of Newburg.

His disposition to the mathematics was discovered very early, by his drawing parallel lines on his bread and butter, and intersecting them at equal angles, so as to form the whole superficies into squares. But in the midst of all these improvements a stop was put to his learning the alphabet, nor would he let him proceed to the letter D, till he could truly and distinctly pronounce C in the ancient manner, at which the child unhappily boggled for near three months. He was also obliged to delay his learning to write, having turned away the writing-master because he knew nothing of Fabius's waxen tables.

Cornelius having read and seriously weighed the methods by which the famous Montaigne was educated, and resolving in some degree to exceed them, resolved he should speak and learn nothing but the learned languages, and especially the Greek; in which he constantly eat and drank, according to Homer. But what most conduced to his easy attainment of this language was his love of gingerbread: which his father observing, caused to be stamped with the letters of the Greek alphabet; and the child the very first day eat as far as Iota. By his particular application to this language above the rest, he attained so great a proficiency therein, that Gronovius ingenuously confesses he durst not confer with this child in Greek at eight years old; and at fourteen he composed a tragedy in the same language, as the younger Pliny had done before him.

He learned the Oriental languages of Erpenius, who resided some time with his father for that purpose. He had so early a relish for the Eastern way of writing, that even at this time he composed (in imitation of it) 'A Thousand and One Arabian Tales,' and also the 'Persian Tales,' which have been since translated into several languages, and lately into our own with particular elegance by Mr. Ambrose Philips. In this work of his childhood he was not a little assisted by the historical traditions of his nurse.

THE ARGONAUTIC LEGEND

The legend of the Argonauts relates to the story of a band of heroes who sailed from Thessaly to Æa, the region of the Sun-god on the remotest shore of the Black Sea, in quest of a Golden Fleece. The ship Argo bore the heroes, under the command of Jason, to whom the task had been assigned by his uncle Pelias. Pelias was the usurper of his nephew's throne; and for Jason, on his coming to man's estate, he devised the perilous adventure of fetching the golden fleece of the Speaking Ram which many years before had carried Phrixus to Æa, or Colchis. Fifty of the most distinguished Grecian heroes came to Jason's aid, while Argus, the son of Phrixus, under the guidance of Athena, built the ship, inserting in the prow, for prophetic advice and furtherance, a piece of the famous talking oak of Dodona. Tiphys was the steersman, and Orpheus joined the crew to enliven the weariness of their sea-life with his harp.

The heroes came first to Lemnos, where the women had risen in revolt and slain fathers, brothers, and husbands. Here the voyagers lingered almost a year; but at last, having taken leave, they came to the southern coast of Propontis, where the Doliones dwelt under King Cyzicus. Their kind entertainment among this people was marred by ill-fate; for having weighed anchor in the night, they were driven back by a storm, and being mistaken for foes, were fiercely attacked. Cyzicus himself fell by the hand of Jason. They next touched at the country of the Bebrycians, where the hero Pollux overcame the king in a boxing-match and bound him to a tree; and thence to Salmydessus, to consult the soothsayer Phineus. In gratitude for their freeing him from the Harpies, who, as often as his table was set, descended out of the clouds upon his food and defiled it, the prophet directed them safe to Colchis. The heroes rowing with might, thus passed the Symplegades, two cliffs which opened and shut with such swift violence that a bird could scarce fly through the passage. The rocks were held apart with the help of Athena, and from that day they became fixed and harmless. Further on, they came in sight of Mount Caucasus, saw the eagle which preyed on the vitals of Prometheus, and heard the sufferer's woeful cries. So their journey was accomplished, and they arrived at Æa and the palace of King Æetes.

When the king heard the errand of the heroes he was moved against them, and refused to give up the fleece except on terms which he thought Jason durst not comply with. Two bulls, snorting fire, with feet of brass, Jason was required to yoke, and with them plow a field and sow the land with dragon's teeth. Here the heavenly powers came to the hero's aid, and Hera and Athena prayed Aphrodite to send the shaft of Cupid upon Medea, the youthful daughter of the king. Thus it came about that Medea conceived a great passion for the young hero, and with the magic which she knew she made for him a salve. The salve rendered his body invulnerable. He yoked the bulls, and ploughed the field, and sowed the dragon's teeth. A crop of armed men sprang from the sowing, but Jason, prepared for this marvel by Medea, threw among them a stone which she had given him, whereupon they fell upon and slew one another.

But Æetes still refused to fetch the fleece, plotting secretly to burn the Argo and kill the heroic Argonauts. Medea came to their succor, and by her black art lulled to sleep the dragon which guarded the fleece. They seized the pelt, boarded the Argo, and sailed away, taking Medea with them. When her father followed in pursuit, in the madness of her love for Jason she slew her brother whom she had with her, and strewed the fragments of his body upon the wave. The king stopped to recover them and give them burial, and thus the Argonauts escaped. But the anger of the gods at this horrible murder led the voyagers in expiation a wearisome way homeward. For they sailed through the waters of the Adriatic, the Nile, the circumfluous stream of the earth, passed Scylla and Charybdis and the Island of the Sun, to Crete and Ægina and many lands, before the Argo rode once more in Thessalian waters.

The legend is one of the oldest and most familiar tales of Greece. Whether it is all poetic myth, or had a certain foundation in fact, it is impossible now to say. The date, the geography, the heroes, are mythical; and as in the Homeric poems, the supernatural and seeming historical are so blended that the union is indissoluble by any analysis yet found. The theme has touched the imagination of poets from the time of Apollonius Rhodius, who wrote the ‹Argonautica› and went to Alexandria B. C. 194 to take care of the great library there, to William Morris, who published his ‹Life and Death of Jason› in 1867. Mr. Morris's version of the contest of Orpheus with the Sirens is given to illustrate the reality of the old legends to the Greeks themselves. Jason's later life, his putting away of Medea, his marriage with Glauce, and the revenge of the deserted princess, furnish the story of the greatest of the plays of Euripides.

THE VICTORY OF ORPHEUS

From ‘The Life and Death of Jason’

The Sirens:

Oh, happy seafarers are ye,
And surely all your ills are past,
And toil upon the land and sea,
Since ye are brought to us at last.

To you the fashion of the world,
Wide lands laid waste, fair cities burned,
And plagues, and kings from kingdoms hurled,
Are naught, since hither ye have turned.

For as upon this beach we stand,
And o'er our heads the sea-fowl flit,
Our eyes behold a glorious land,
And soon shall ye be kings of it.

Orpheus:

A little more, a little more,
O carriers of the Golden Fleece,
A little labor with the oar,
Before we reach the land of Greece.

E'en now perchance faint rumors reach
Men's ears of this our victory,
And draw them down unto the beach
To gaze across the empty sea.

But since the longed-for day is nigh,
And scarce a god could stay us now,
Why do ye hang your heads and sigh,
And still go slower and more slow?

The Sirens:

Ah, had ye chanced to reach the home
Your fond desires were set upon,
Into what troubles had ye come!
What barren victory had ye won!

But now, but now, when ye have lain
Asleep with us a little while
Beneath the washing of the main,
How calm shall be your waking smile!

For ye shall smile to think of life
That knows no troublous change or fear,
No unavailing bitter strife,
That ere its time brings trouble near.

Orpheus:

Is there some murmur in your ears,
That all that we have done is naught,
And nothing ends our cares and fears,
Till the last fear on us is brought?

The Sirens:

Alas! and will ye stop your ears,
In vain desire to do aught,
And wish to live 'mid cares and fears,
Until the last fear makes you naught?

Orpheus:

Is not the May-time now on earth,
When close against the city wall
The folk are singing in their mirth,
While on their heads the May flowers fall?

The Sirens:

Yes, May is come, and its sweet breath
Shall well-nigh make you weep to-day,
And pensive with swift-coming death
Shall ye be satiate of the May.

Orpheus:

Shall not July bring fresh delight,
As underneath green trees ye sit,
And o'er some damsel's body white,
The noon-tide shadows change and flit?

The Sirens:

No new delight July shall bring,
But ancient fear and fresh desire;
And spite of every lovely thing,
Of July surely shall ye tire.

Orpheus:

And now when August comes on thee,
And 'mid the golden sea of corn
The merry reapers thou mayst see,
Wilt thou still think the earth forlorn?

The Sirens:

Set flowers on thy short-lived head,
And in thine heart forgetfulness
Of man's hard toil, and scanty bread,
And weary of those days no less.

Orpheus:

Or wilt thou climb the sunny hill,
In the October afternoon,
To watch the purple earth's blood fill
The gray vat to the maiden's tune?

The Sirens:

When thou beginnest to grow old,
Bring back remembrance of thy bliss
With that the shining cup doth hold,
And weary helplessly of this.

Orpheus:

Or pleasureless shall we pass by
The long cold night and leaden day,
That song and tale and minstrelsy
Shall make as merry as the May?

The Sirens:

List then, to-night, to some old tale
Until the tears o'erflow thine eyes;
But what shall all these things avail,
When sad to-morrow comes and dies?

Orpheus:

And when the world is born again,
And with some fair love, side by side,
Thou wanderest 'twixt the sun and rain,
In that fresh love-begetting tide;

Then, when the world is born again,
And the sweet year before thee lies,
Shall thy heart think of coming pain,
Or vex itself with memories?

The Sirens:

Ah! then the world is born again
With burning love unsatisfied,
And new desires fond and vain,
And weary days from tide to tide.

Ah! when the world is born again,
  A little day is soon gone by,
When thou, unmoved by sun or rain,
  Within a cold straight house shall lie.

Therewith they ceased awhile, as languidly
The head of Argo fell off toward the sea,
And through the water she began to go;
For from the land a fitful wind did blow,
That, dallying with the many-colored sail,
Would sometimes swell it out and sometimes fail,
As nigh the east side of the bay they drew;
Then o'er the waves again the music flew.

The Sirens:

Think not of pleasure short and vain,
Wherewith, 'mid days of toil and pain,
With sick and sinking hearts ye strive
To cheat yourselves that ye may live
With cold death ever close at hand.
Think rather of a peaceful land,
The changeless land where ye may be
Roofed over by the changeful sea.

Orpheus:

And is the fair town nothing then,
The coming of the wandering men
With that long talked-of thing and strange.
And news of how the kingdoms change,
The pointed hands, and wondering
At doers of a desperate thing?
Push on, for surely this shall be
Across a narrow strip of sea.

The Sirens:

Alas! poor souls and timorous,
Will ye draw nigh to gaze at us
And see if we are fair indeed?
For such as we shall be your meed,
There, where our hearts would have you go.
And where can the earth-dwellers show
In any land such loveliness
As that wherewith your eyes we bless,
O wanderers of the Minyæ,
Worn toilers over land and sea?

Orpheus:

Fair as the lightning 'thwart the sky,
As sun-dyed snow upon the high
Untrodden heaps of threatening stone
The eagle looks upon alone,
Oh, fair as the doomed victim's wreath,
Oh, fair as deadly sleep and death,
What will ye with them, earthly men,
To mate your threescore years and ten?
Toil rather, suffer and be free,
Betwixt the green earth and the sea.

The Sirens:

If ye be bold with us to go,
Things such as happy dreams may show
Shall your once heavy lids behold
About our palaces of gold;
Where waters 'neath the waters run,
And from o'erhead a harmless sun
Gleams through the woods of chrysolite.
There gardens fairer to the sight
Than those of the Phæacian king
Shall ye behold; and, wondering,
Gaze on the sea-born fruit and flowers,
And thornless and unchanging bowers,
Whereof the May-time knoweth naught.

So to the pillared house being brought,
Poor souls, ye shall not be alone,
For o'er the floors of pale blue stone
All day such feet as ours shall pass,
And 'twixt the glimmering walls of glass,
Such bodies garlanded with gold,
So faint, so fair, shall ye behold,
And clean forget the treachery
Of changing earth and tumbling sea.

Orpheus:

Oh the sweet valley of deep grass,
Where through the summer stream doth pass,
In chain of shadow, and still pool,
From misty morn to evening cool;
Where the black ivy creeps and twines
O'er the dark-armed, red-trunkèd pines,

Whence clattering the pigeon flits,
Or brooding o'er her thin eggs sits,
And every hollow of the hills
With echoing song the mavis fills.
There by the stream, all unafraid,
Shall stand the happy shepherd maid,
Alone in first of sunlit hours;
Behind her, on the dewy flowers,
Her homespun woolen raiment lies,
And her white limbs and sweet gray eyes
Shine from the calm green pool and deep,
While round about the swallows sweep,
Not silent; and would God that we,
Like them, were landed from the sea.

The Sirens:

Shall we not rise with you at night,
Up through the shimmering green twilight,
That maketh there our changeless day,
Then going through the moonlight gray,
Shall we not sit upon these sands,
To think upon the troublous lands
Long left behind, where once ye were,
When every day brought change and fear!
There, with white arms about you twined,
And shuddering somewhat at the wind
That ye rejoiced erewhile to meet,
Be happy, while old stories sweet,
Half understood, float round your ears,
And fill your eyes with happy tears.
Ah! while we sing unto you there,
As now we sing, with yellow hair
Blown round about these pearly limbs,
While underneath the gray sky swims
The light shell-sailor of the waves,
And to our song. from sea-filled caves
Booms out an echoing harmony,
Shall ye not love the peaceful sea?

Orpheus:

Nigh the vine-covered hillocks green,
In days agone, have I not seen
The brown-clad maidens amorous,
Below the long rose-trellised house,

Dance to the querulous pipe and shrill,
When the gray shadow of the hill
Was lengthening at the end of day?
Not shadowy or pale were they,
But limbed like those who 'twixt the trees
Follow the swift of goddesses.
Sunburnt they are somewhat, indeed,
To where the rough brown woolen weed
Is drawn across their bosoms sweet,
Or cast from off their dancing feet;
But yet the stars, the moonlight gray,
The water wan, the dawn of day,
Can see their bodies fair and white
As hers, who once, for man's delight,
Before the world grew hard and old,
Came o'er the bitter sea and cold;
And surely those that met me there
Her handmaidens and subjects were;
And shame-faced, half-repressed desire
Had lit their glorious eyes with fire,
That maddens eager hearts of men.
Oh, would that I were with them when
The risen moon is gathering light,
And yellow from the homestead white
The windows gleam; but verily
This waits us o'er a little sea.

The Sirens:

Come to the land where none grows old,
And none is rash or over-bold
Nor any noise there is or war,
Or rumor from wild lands afar,
Or plagues, or birth and death of kings;
No vain desire of unknown things
Shall vex you there, no hope or fear
Of that which never draweth near;
But in that lovely land and still
Ye may remember what ye will,
And what ye will, forget for aye.
So while the kingdoms pass away,
Ye sea-beat hardened toilers erst,
Unresting, for vain fame athirst,
Shall be at peace for evermore,
With hearts fulfilled of Godlike lore,

And calm, unwavering Godlike love,
No lapse of time can turn or move.
There, ages after your fair fleece
Is clean forgotten, yea, and Greece
Is no more counted glorious,
Alone with us, alone with us,
Alone with us, dwell happily,
Beneath our trembling roof of sea.

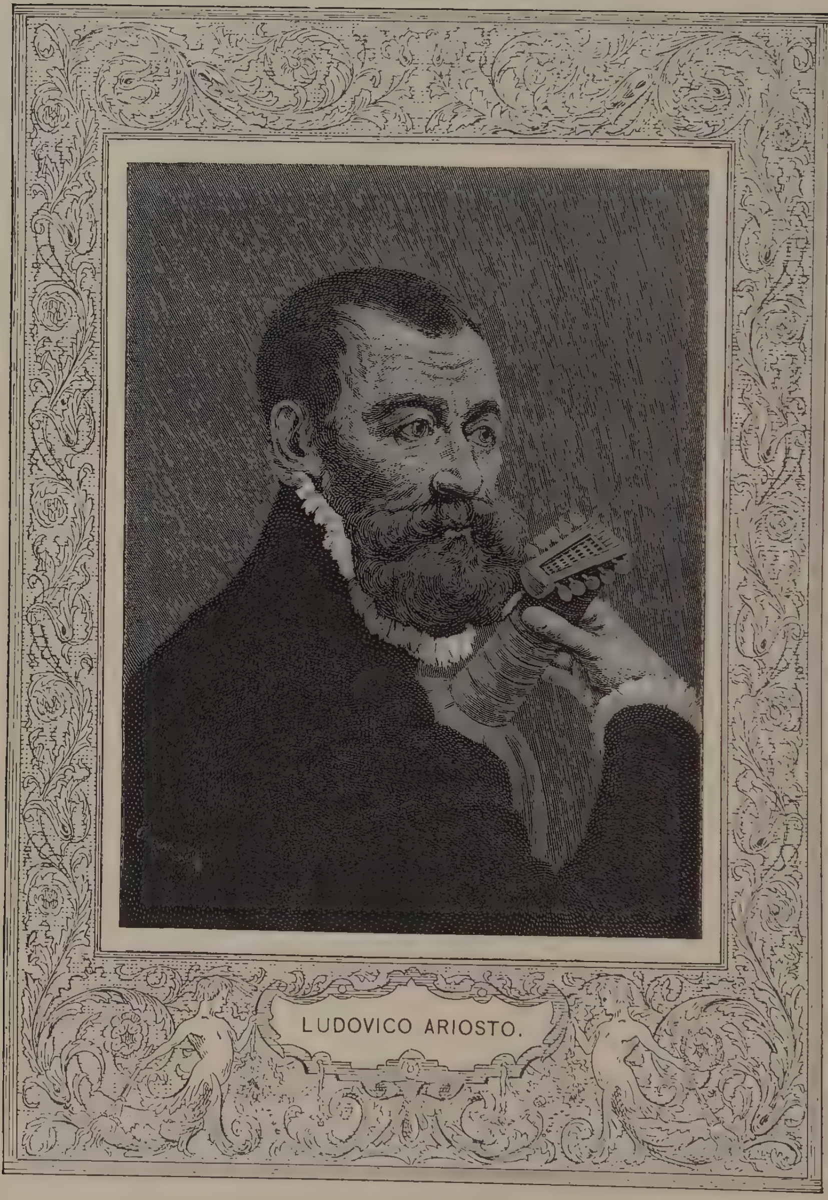
Orpheus:

Ah! do ye weary of the strife,
And long to change this eager life
For shadowy and dull hopelessness,
Thinking indeed to gain no less
Than this, to die, and not to die,
To be as if ye ne'er had been,
Yet keep your memory fresh and green,
To have no thought of good or ill,
Yet keep some thrilling pleasure still?
Oh, idle dream! Ah, verily
If it shall happen unto me
That I have thought of anything,
When o'er my bones the sea-fowl sing,
And I lie dead, how shall I pine
For those fresh joys that once were mine,
On this green fount of joy and mirth,
The ever young and glorious earth;
Then, helpless, shall I call to mind
Thoughts of the flower-scented wind,
The dew, the gentle rain at night,
The wonder-working snow and white,
The song of birds, the water's fall,
The sun that maketh bliss of all;
Yea, this our toil and victory,
The tyrannous and conquered sea.

The Sirens:

Ah, will ye go, and whither then
   Will ye go from us, soon to die,
To fill your threescore years and ten
   With many an unnamed misery?

And this the wretchedest of all,
   That when upon your lonely eyes
The last faint heaviness shall fall,
   Ye shall bethink you of our cries.



LUDOVICO ARIOSTO.

Come back, nor, grown old, seek in vain
To hear us sing across the sea;
Come back, come back, come back again,
Come back, O fearful Minyæ!

Orpheus:

Ah, once again, ah, once again,
The black prow plunges through the sea;
Nor yet shall all your toil be vain,
Nor ye forget, O Minyæ!

LUDOVICO ARIOSTO

(1474-1533)

BY L. OSCAR KUHNS

Among the smaller principalities of Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, none was more brilliant than the court of Ferrara, and none more intimately connected with the literature of the times. Here, on September 8th, 1474, was born Ludovico Ariosto, the great poet of the Renaissance. Here, like Boiardo before him and Tasso after him, he lived and wrote; and it was to the family of Este that he dedicated that poem in which are seen, as in a mirror, the gay life, the intellectual brilliancy, and the sensuous love for beauty which mark the age. At seventeen he began the study of the law, which he soon abandoned for the charms of letters. Most of his life was passed in the service first of Cardinal d'Este, and afterward of the Duke of Ferrara. But the courtier never overcame the poet, who is said to have begun the famous 'Orlando Furioso' at the age of thirty, and never to have ceased the effort to improve it.

The literary activity of Ariosto showed itself in the composition of comedies and satires, as well as in that of his immortal epic. The comedies were written for the court theatre of Ferrara, to which he seems to have had some such relation as that of Goethe to the theatre at Weimar. The later comedies are much better than the early ones, which are but little more than translations from Plautus and Terence. In general, however, the efforts of Ariosto in this direction are far less important than the 'Orlando' or the 'Satires.' At the first appearance of his plays they were enormously successful, and the poet was hailed as a great dramatic genius. But these comedies are interesting to-day chiefly from the fact that Ariosto was one of the very first of the writers of modern comedy, and was the leader of that movement in Italy and France which prepared the way for Molière.

Of more importance than the comedies, and second only in interest to the 'Orlando,' are the 'Satires,' seven in number, the first written in 1517 and the last in 1531, thus representing the maturer life of the poet. Nearly everything we know of Ariosto's character is taken from this source. He reveals himself in them as a man who excites neither our highest admiration nor our contempt. He was not born to be a statesman, nor a courtier, nor a man of affairs; and his life as ambassador of Cardinal Ippolito, and as captain of Garafagno, was not at all to his liking. His one longing through all the busy years of his life was for a quiet home, where he could live in liberty and enjoy the comforts of cultured leisure. A love of independence was a marked trait of his character, and it must often have galled him to play the part he did at the court of Ferrara. As a satirist he was no Juvenal or Persius. He was not stirred to profound indignation by the evils about him, of which there were enough in that brilliant but corrupt age. He discussed in easy, familiar style, the foibles of his fellow-men, and especially the events of his own life and the traits of his own character.

The same views of life, the same tolerant temper, which are seen in the 'Satires,' form an important part of the 'Orlando Furioso,' where they take the form of little dissertations, introduced at the beginning of a canto, or scattered through the body of the poem. These reflections are full of practical sense and wisdom, and remind us of the familiar conversation with the reader which forms so great a charm in Thackeray's novels.

In the Italian Renaissance there is a curious mingling of classical and romantic influences, and the generation which gave itself up passionately to the study of Greek and Latin still read with delight the stories of the Paladins of Charlemagne and the Knights of the Round Table. What Sir Thomas Malory had done in English prose, Boiardo did in Latin poetry. When Ariosto entered the service of Cardinal Ippolito, every one was reading the 'Orlando Innamorato,' and the young poet soon fell under the charm of these stories; so that when the inward impulse which all great poets feel toward the work of creation came to him, he took the material already at hand and continued the story of 'Orlando.' With a certain skill and inventiveness, Boiardo had mingled together the epic cycles of Arthur and Charlemagne. He had shown the Saracen host under King Agramante driving the army of Charlemagne before them, until the Christians had finally been shut up within the walls of Paris. It was at this critical moment in his poem that Boiardo died. Ariosto took up the story where he had left it, and carried it on until the final defeat of Agramante, and his death at the hands of Orlando in the desert island.

But we must not think that the 'Orlando Furioso' has one definite plot. At first reading we are confused by the multiplicity of incident, by the constant change of scene, and by the breaking off of one story to make place for another. In a single canto the scene changes from France to Africa, and by means of winged horses tremendous distances are traveled over in a day. On closer examination we find that this confusion is only apparent. The poet himself is never confused, but with sure hand he manipulates the many-colored threads which are wrought into the fabric of the poem. The war between the Saracens and the Christians is a sort of background or stage; a rallying point for the characters. In reality it attracts but slightly our attention or interest. Again, Orlando's love for Angelica, and his madness,—although the latter gave the title to the book, and both afford some of the finest episodes,—have no organic connection with the whole. The real subject, if any there be, is the loves of Ruggiero and Bradamante. These are the supposed ancestors of the house of Este, and it is with their final union, after many vicissitudes, that the poem ends.

But the real purpose of Ariosto was to amuse the reader by countless stories of romantic adventure. It was not as a great creative genius, as the inventor of new characters, as the earnest and philosophical reformer, that he appears to mankind, but as the supreme artist. Ariosto represents in its highest development that love for form, that perfection of style, which is characteristic of the Latin races as distinguished from the Teutonic. It is this that makes the 'Orlando Furioso' the great epic of the Renaissance, and that caused Galileo to bestow upon the poet the epithet «divine.»

For nearly thirty years Ariosto changed and polished these lines, so that the edition of 1532 is quite different from that of 1516. The stanzas in which the poem is written are smooth and musical, the language is so chosen as always to express the exact shade of thought, the interest never flags. What seems the arbitrary breaking off of a story before its close is really the art of the poet; for he knows, were each episode to be told by itself, we should have only a string of *novelle*, and not the picture he desired to paint,—that of the world of chivalry, with its knights-errant in search of adventures, its damsels in distress, its beautiful gardens and lordly palaces, its hermits and magicians, its hippogriffs and dragons, and all the paraphernalia of magic art.

Ariosto's treatment of chivalry is peculiar to himself. Spenser in the sixteenth century, and Lord Tennyson in our own day, pictured its virtues and noble aspirations. In his immortal 'Don Quixote,' Cervantes held its extravagances up to ridicule. In Ariosto's day no one believed any longer in the heroes or the ideals of chivalry, nor did the poet himself; hence there is an air of unreality about the poem. The figures that pass before us, although they have certain characteristics of their own, are not real beings, but those that dwell in a land of fancy. As the poet tells these stories of a bygone age, a smile of irony plays upon his face; he cannot take them seriously; and while he never goes so far as to turn into ridicule the ideals of chivalry, yet, in such episodes as the prodigious exploits of Rodomonte within the walls of Paris, and the voyage of Astolfo to the moon, he does approach dangerously near to the burlesque.

We are not inspired by large and noble thoughts in reading the 'Orlando Furioso.' We are not deeply stirred by pity or terror. No lofty principles are inculcated. Even the pathetic scenes, such as the death of Zerbino and Isabella, stir no real emotion in us, but we experience a sense of the artistic effect of a poetic death.

It is not often, in these days of the making of many books of which there is no end, that one has time to read a poem which is longer than the 'Iliad' and the 'Odyssey' together. But there is a compelling charm about the 'Orlando,' and he who sits down to read it with serious purpose will soon find himself under the spell of an attraction which comes from unflagging interest and from perfection of style and construction. No translation can convey an adequate sense of this beauty of color and form; but the versions of William Stewart Rose, here cited, suggest the energy, invention, and intensity of the epic.

In 1532 Ariosto published his final edition of the poem, now enlarged to forty-six cantos, and retouched from beginning to end. He died not long afterward, in 1533, and was buried in the church of San Benedetto, where a magnificent monument marks his resting-place.

L. Oscar Kuhns.

THE FRIENDSHIP OF MEDORO AND CLORIDANE

From ‹Orlando Furioso,› Cantos 18 and 19

Two Moors among the Paynim army were,
From stock obscure in Ptolomita grown;
Of whom the story, an example rare
Of constant love, is worthy to be known.
Medore and Cloridane were named the pair;
Who, whether Fortune pleased to smile or frown,
Served Dardinello with fidelity,
And late with him to France had crost the sea.

Of nimble frame and strong was Cloridane,
Throughout his life a follower of the chase.
A cheek of white, suffused with crimson grain,
Medoro had, in youth, a pleasing grace;
Nor bound on that emprize, 'mid all the train,
Was there a fairer or more jocund face.
Crisp hair he had of gold, and jet-black eyes;
And seemed an angel lighted from the skies.

These two were posted on a rampart's height,
With more to guard the encampment from surprise,
When 'mid the equal intervals, at night,
Medoro gazed on heaven with sleepy eyes.
In all his talk, the stripling, woeful wight,
Here cannot choose, but of his lord devise,
The royal Dardinel; and evermore
Him left unhonored on the field, deplore.

Then, turning to his mate, cries, «Cloridane,
I cannot tell thee what a cause of woe
It is to me, my lord upon the plain
Should lie, unworthy food for wolf or crow!
Thinking how still to me he was humane,
Meseems, if in his honor I forego
This life of mine, for favors so immense
I shall but make a feeble recompense.

«That he may not lack sepulture, will I
Go forth, and seek him out among the slain;
And haply God may will that none shall spy
Where Charles's camp lies hushed. Do thou remain;
That, if my death be written in the sky,
Thou may'st the deed be able to explain.

So that if Fortune foil so far a feat,
The world, through Fame, my loving heart may weet.»

Amazed was Cloridane a child should show
  Such heart, such love, and such fair loyalty;
And fain would make the youth his thought forego,
  Whom he held passing dear: but fruitlessly
Would move his steadfast purpose; for such woe
  Will neither comforted nor altered be.
Medoro is disposed to meet his doom,
Or to inclose his master in the tomb.

Seeing that naught would bend him, naught would move,
  «I too will go,» was Cloridane's reply:
«In such a glorious act myself will prove;
  As well such famous death I covet, I.
What other thing is left me, here above,
  Deprived of thee, Medoro mine? To die
With thee in arms is better, on the plain,
Than afterwards of grief, shouldst thou be slain.»

And thus resolved, disposing in their place
  Their guard's relief, depart the youthful pair,
Leave fosse and palisade, and in small space
  Are among ours, who watch with little care;
Who, for they little fear the Paynim race,
  Slumber with fires extinguished everywhere.
'Mid carriages and arms they lie supine,
Up to the eyes immersed in sleep and wine.

A moment Cloridano stopt, and cried,
  «Not to be lost are opportunities.
This troop, by whom my master's blood was shed,
  Medoro, ought not I to sacrifice?
Do thou, lest any one this way be led,
  Watch everywhere about, with ears and eyes;
For a wide way, amid the hostile horde,
I offer here to make thee with my sword.»

So said he, and his talk cut quickly short,
  Coming where learned Alpheus slumbered nigh;
Who had the year before sought Charles's court,
  In med'cine, magic, and astrology
Well versed: but now in art found small support,
  Or rather found that it was all a lie.
He had foreseen that he his long-drawn life
Should finish on the bosom of his wife.

And now the Saracen with wary view
   Had pierced his weasand with the pointed sword.
Four others he near that Diviner slew,
   Nor gave the wretches time to say a word.
Sir Turpin in his story tells not who,
   And Time has of their names effaced record.
Palidon of Moncalier next he speeds;
One who securely sleeps between two steeds.

. . . .

Rearing th' insidious blade, the pair are near
   The place where round King Charles's pavilion
Are tented warlike paladin and peer,
   Guarding the side that each is camped upon,
When in good time the Paynims backward steer,
   And sheathe their swords, the impious slaughter done;
Deeming impossible, in such a number,
But they must light on one who does not slumber.

And though they might escape well charged with prey,
   To save themselves they think sufficient gain.
Thither by what he deems the safest way
   (Medoro following him) went Cloridane
Where in the field, 'mid bow and falchion lay,
   And shield and spear, in pool of purple stain,
Wealthy and poor, the king and vassal's corse,
And overthrown the rider and his horse.

. . . .

The silvery splendor glistened yet more clear,
   There where renowned Almontes's son lay dead.
Faithful Medoro mourned his master dear,
   Who well agnized the quartering white and red,
With visage bathed in many a bitter tear
   (For he a rill from either eyelid shed),
And piteous act and moan, that might have whist
The winds, his melancholy plaint to list;

But with a voice supprest — not that he aught
   Regards if any one the noise should hear,
Because he of his life takes any thought,
   Of which loathed burden he would fain be clear;
But lest his being heard should bring to naught
   The pious purpose which has brought them here —
The youths the king upon their shoulders stowed;
And so between themselves divide the load.

Hurrying their steps, they hastened, as they might,
Under the cherished burden they conveyed;
And now approaching was the lord of light,
To sweep from heaven the stars, from earth the shade,
When good Zerbino, he whose valiant sprite
Was ne'er in time of need by sleep down-weighed,
From chasing Moors all night, his homeward way
Was taking to the camp at dawn of day.

He has with him some horsemen in his train,
That from afar the two companions spy.
Expecting thus some spoil or prize to gain,
They, every one, toward that quarter hie.
«Brother, behoves us,» cried young Cloridane,
«To cast away the load we bear, and fly;
For 'twere a foolish thought (might well be said)
To lose *two* living men, to save *one* dead;»

And dropt the burden, weening his Medore
Had done the same by it, upon his side;
But that poor boy, who loved his master more,
His shoulders to the weight alone applied:
Cloridane hurrying with all haste before,
Deeming him close behind him or beside;
Who, did he know his danger, him to save
A thousand deaths, instead of one, would brave.

. . . .

The closest path, amid the forest gray,
To save himself, pursued the youth forlorn;
But all his schemes were marred by the delay
Of that sore weight upon his shoulders borne.
The place he knew not, and mistook the way,
And hid himself again in sheltering thorn.
Secure and distant was his mate, that through
The greenwood shade with lighter shoulders flew.

So far was Cloridane advanced before,
He heard the boy no longer in the wind;
But when he marked the absence of Medore,
It seemed as if his heart was left behind.
«Ah! how was I so negligent,» (the Moor
Exclaimed) «so far beside myself, and blind,
That, I, Medoro, should without thee fare,
Nor know when I deserted thee or where?»

So saying, in the wood he disappears,
Plunging into the maze with hurried pace;
And thither, whence he lately issued, steers,
And, desperate, of death returns in trace.
Cries and the tread of steeds this while he hears,
And word and threat of foeman, as in chase;
Lastly Medoro by his voice is known,
Disarmed, on foot, 'mid many horse, alone.

A hundred horsemen who the youth surround,
Zerbino leads, and bids his followers seize
The stripling; like a top the boy turns round
And keeps him as he can: among the trees,
Behind oak, elm, beech, ash, he takes his ground,
Nor from the cherished load his shoulders frees.
Wearied, at length, the burden he bestowed
Upon the grass, and stalked about his load.

As in her rocky cavern the she-bear,
With whom close warfare Alpine hunters wage,
Uncertain hangs about her shaggy care,
And growls in mingled sound of love and rage,
To unsheath her claws, and blood her tushes bare,
Would natural hate and wrath the beast engage;
Love softens her, and bids from strife retire,
And for her offspring watch, amid her ire.

Cloridane, who to aid him knows not how,
And with Medoro willingly would die,
But who would not for death this being forego,
Until more foes than one should lifeless lie,
Ambushed, his sharpest arrow to his bow
Fits, and directs it with so true an eye,
The feathered weapon bores a Scotchman's brain,
And lays the warrior dead upon the plain.

Together, all the others of the band
Turned thither, whence was shot the murderous reed;
Meanwhile he launched another from his stand,
That a new foe might by the weapon bleed,
Whom (while he made of *this* and *that* demand,
And loudly questioned who had done the deed)
The arrow reached — transfixed the wretch's throat
And cut his question short in middle note.

Zerbino, captain of those horse, no more
   Can at the piteous sight his wrath refrain;
In furious heat he springs upon Medore,
   Exclaiming, «Thou of this shalt bear the pain.»
One hand he in his locks of golden ore
   Enwreaths, and drags him to himself amain;
But as his eyes that beauteous face survey,
Takes pity on the boy, and does not slay.

To him the stripling turns, with suppliant cry,
   And, «By thy God, sir knight,» exclaims, «I pray,
Be not so passing cruel, nor deny
   That I in earth my honored king may lay:
No other grace I supplicate, nor I
   This for the love of life, believe me, say.
So much, no longer, space of life I crave,
As may suffice to give my lord a grave.

«And if you needs must feed the beast and bird,
   Like Theban Creon, let their worst be done
Upon these limbs; so that by me interred
   In earth be those of good Almontes's son.»
Medoro thus his suit, with grace, preferred,
   And words to move a mountain; and so won
Upon Zerbino's mood, to kindness turned,
With love and pity he all over burned.

This while, a churlish horseman of the band,
   Who little deference for his lord confest,
His lance uplifting, wounded overhand
   The unhappy suppliant in his dainty breast.
Zerbino, who the cruel action scanned,
   Was deeply stirred, the rather that, opprest,
And livid with the blow the churl had sped,
Medoro fell as he was wholly dead.

. . . .

The Scots pursue their chief, who pricks before,
   Through the deep wood, inspired by high disdain,
When he has left the one and the other Moor,
   This dead, *that* scarce alive, upon the plain.
There for a mighty space lay young Medore,
   Spouting his life-blood from so large a vein
He would have perished, but that thither made
A stranger, as it chanced, who lent him aid.

THE SAVING OF MEDORO

From ‹Orlando Furioso,› Canto 19

By chance arrived a damsel at the place,
Who was (though mean and rustic was her wear)
Of royal presence and of beauteous face,
And lofty manners, sagely debonnair.
Her have I left unsung so long a space,
That you will hardly recognize the fair
Angelica: in her (if known not) scan
The lofty daughter of Catay's great khan.

Angelica, when she had won again
The ring Brunello had from her conveyed,
So waxed in stubborn pride and haught disdain,
She seemed to scorn this ample world, and strayed
Alone, and held as cheap each living swain,
Although amid the best by fame arrayed;
Nor brooked she to remember a gallant
In Count Orlando or King Sacripant:

And above every other deed repented,
That good Rinaldo she had loved of yore;
And that to look so low she had consented,
(As by such choice dishonored) grieved her sore.
Love, hearing this, such arrogance resented,
And would the damsel's pride endure no more.
Where young Medoro lay he took his stand,
And waited her, with bow and shaft in hand.

When fair Angelica the stripling spies,
Nigh hurt to death in that disastrous fray,
Who for his king, that there unsheltered lies,
More sad than for his own misfortune lay,
She feels new pity in her bosom rise,
Which makes its entry in unwonted way.
Touched was her naughty heart, once hard and curst,
And more when he his piteous tale rehearsed.

And calling back to memory her art,
For she in Ind had learned chirurgery,
(Since it appears such studies in that part
Worthy of praise and fame are held to be,
And, as an heirloom, sires to sons impart,
With little aid of books, the mystery,)

Disposed herself to work with simples' juice,
Till she in him should healthier life produce.

And recollects an herb had caught her sight
In passing thither, on a pleasant plain:
What (whether dittany or pancy hight)
I know not; fraught with virtue to restrain
The crimson blood forth-welling, and of might
To sheathe each perilous and piercing pain.
She found it near, and having pulled the weed,
Returned to seek Medoro on the mead.

Returning, she upon a swain did light,
Who was on horseback passing through the wood.
Strayed from the lowing herd, the rustic wight
A heifer missing for two days pursued.
Him she with her conducted, where the might
Of the faint youth was ebbing with his blood:
Which had the ground about so deeply dyed
Life was nigh wasted with the gushing tide.

Angelica alights upon the ground,
And he, her rustic comrade, at her hest.
She hastened 'twixt two stones the herb to pound,
Then took it, and the healing juice exprest:
With this did she foment the stripling's wound,
And even to the hips, his waist and breast;
And (with such virtue was the salve endued)
It stanched his life-blood, and his strength renewed.

And into him infused such force again,
That he could mount the horse the swain conveyed;
But good Medoro would not leave the plain
Till he in earth had seen his master laid.
He, with the monarch, buried Cloridane,
And after followed whither pleased the maid.
Who was to stay with him, by pity led,
Beneath the courteous shepherd's humble shed.

Nor would the damsel quit the lowly pile
(So she esteemed the youth) till he was sound;
Such pity first she felt, when him erewhile
She saw outstretched and bleeding on the ground.
Touched by his mien and manners next, a file
She felt corrode her heart with secret wound;
She felt corrode her heart, and with desire,
By little and by little warmed, took fire.

The shepherd dwelt between two mountains hoar,
  In goodly cabin, in the greenwood shade,
With wife and children; in short time before,
  The brand-new shed had builded in the glade.
Here of his grisly wound the youthful Moor
  Was briefly healed by the Catayan maid;
But who in briefer space, a sorer smart
Than young Medoro's, suffered at her heart.

[She pines for love of him, and at length makes her love known. They solemnize their marriage, and remain a month there with great happiness.]

Amid such pleasures, where, with tree o'ergrown,
  Ran stream, or bubbling fountain's wave did spin,
On bark or rock, if yielding were the stone,
  The knife was straight at work, or ready pin.
And there, without, in thousand places lone,
  And in as many places graved, within,
Medoro and Angelica were traced,
In divers ciphers quaintly interlaced.

When she believed they had prolonged their stay
  More than enow, the damsel made design
In India to revisit her Catay,
  And with its crown Medoro's head entwine.
She had upon her wrist an armlet, gay
  With costly gems, in witness and in sign
Of love to her by Count Orlando borne,
And which the damsel for long time had worn.

No love which to the paladin she bears,
  But that it costly is and wrought with care,
This to Angelica so much endears,
  That never more esteemed was matter rare;
This she was suffered, in the isle of tears,
  I know not by what privilege, to wear,
When, naked, to the whale exposed for food
By that inhospitable race and rude.

She, not possessing wherewithal to pay
  The kindly couple's hospitality,—
Served by them in their cabin, from the day
  She there was lodged, with such fidelity,—
Unfastened from her arm the bracelet gay,
  And bade them keep it for her memory.
Departing hence, the lovers climb the side
Of hills, which fertile France from Spain divide.

THE MADNESS OF ORLANDO

From ‹Orlando Furioso,› Canto 23

THE course in pathless woods, which without rein
The Tartar's charger had pursued astray,
Made Roland for two days, with fruitless pain,
Follow him, without tidings of his way.
Orlando reached a rill of crystal vein,
On either bank of which a meadow lay;
Which, stained with native hues and rich, he sees,
And dotted o'er with fair and many trees.

The mid-day fervor made the shelter sweet
To hardy herd as well as naked swain;
So that Orlando well beneath the heat
Some deal might wince, opprest with plate and chain.
He entered for repose the cool retreat,
And found it the abode of grief and pain;
And place of sojourn more accursed and fell
On that unhappy day, than tongue can tell.

Turning him round, he there on many a tree
Beheld engraved, upon the woody shore,
What as the writing of his deity
He knew, as soon as he had marked the lore.
This was a place of those described by me,
Whither oft-times, attended by Medore,
From the near shepherd's cot had wont to stray
The beauteous lady, sovereign of Catay.

In a hundred knots, amid these green abodes,
In a hundred parts, their ciphered names are dight;
Whose many letters are so many goads,
Which Love has in his bleeding heart-core pight.
He would discredit in a thousand modes,
That which he credits in his own despite;
And would perforce persuade himself, *that* rind
Other Angelica than his had signed.

«And yet I know these characters,» he cried,
«Of which I have so many read and seen;
By her may this Medoro be belied,
And me, she, figured in the name, may mean.»
Feeding on such like phantasies, beside
The real truth, did sad Orlando lean

Upon the empty hope, though ill contented,
Which he by self-illusions had fomented.

But stirred and aye rekindled it, the more
   That he to quench the ill suspicion wrought,
Like the incautious bird, by fowler's lore,
   Hampered in net or lime; which, in the thought
To free its tangled pinions and to soar,
   By struggling is but more securely caught.
Orlando passes thither, where a mountain
O'erhangs in guise of arch the crystal fountain.

. . . .

Here from his horse the sorrowing county lit,
   And at the entrance of the grot surveyed
A cloud of words, which seemed but newly writ,
   And which the young Medoro's hand had made.
On the great pleasure he had known in it,
   This sentence he in verses had arrayed;
Which to his tongue, I deem, might make pretense
To polished phrase; and such in ours the sense:—

“Gay plants, green herbage, rill of limpid vein,
   And, grateful with cool shade, thou gloomy cave.
Where oft, by many wooed with fruitless pain,
   Beauteous Angelica, the child of grave
King Galaphron, within my arms has lain;
   For the convenient harborage you gave,
I, poor Medoro, can but in my lays,
As recompense, forever sing your praise.

“And any loving lord devoutly pray,
   Damsel and cavalier, and every one,
Whom choice or fortune hither shall convey,
   Stranger or native,—to this crystal run,
Shade, caverned rock, and grass, and plants, to say,
   ‘Benignant be to you the fostering sun
And moon, and may the choir of nymphs provide,
That never swain his flock may hither guide.’”

In Arabic was writ the blessing said,
   Known to Orlando like the Latin tongue,
Who, versed in many languages, best read
   Was in this speech; which oftentimes from wrong
And injury and shame had saved his head,
   What time he roved the Saracens among.

But let him boast not of its former boot,
O'erbalanced by the present bitter fruit.

Three times, and four, and six, the lines impressed
Upon the stone that wretch perused, in vain
Seeking another sense than was expressed,
And ever saw the thing more clear and plain;
And all the while, within his troubled breast,
He felt an icy hand his heart-core strain.
With mind and eyes close fastened on the block,
At length he stood, not differing from the rock.

Then well-nigh lost all feeling; so a prey
Wholly was he to that o'ermastering woe.
This is a pang, believe the experienced say
Of him who speaks, which does all griefs outgo.
His pride had from his forehead passed away,
His chin had fallen upon his breast below;
Nor found he, so grief-barred each natural vent,
Moisture for tears, or utterance for lament.

Stifled within, the impetuous sorrow stays,
Which would too quickly issue; so to abide
Water is seen, imprisoned in the vase,
Whose neck is narrow and whose swell is wide;
What time, when one turns up the inverted base,
Toward the mouth, so hastes the hurrying tide,
And in the strait encounters such a stop,
It scarcely works a passage, drop by drop.

He somewhat to himself returned, and thought
How possibly the thing might be untrue:
That some one (so he hoped, desired, and sought
To think) his lady would with shame pursue;
Or with such weight of jealousy had wrought
To whelm *his* reason, as should him undo;
And that he, whosoe'er the thing had planned,
Had counterfeited passing well her hand.

With such vain hope he sought himself to cheat,
And manned some deal his spirits and awoke;
Then prest the faithful Brigliadoro's seat,
As on the sun's retreat his sister broke.
Not far the warrior had pursued his beat,
Ere eddying from a roof he saw the smoke;
Heard noise of dog and kine, a farm espied,
And thitherward in quest of lodging hied.

Languid, he lit, and left his Brigliador
  To a discreet attendant; one undrest
His limbs, one doffed the golden spurs he wore,
  And one bore off, to clean, his iron vest.
This was the homestead where the young Medore
  Lay wounded, and was here supremely blest.
Orlando here, with other food unfed,
Having supt full of sorrow, sought his bed.

. . . .

Little availed the count his self-deceit;
  For there was one who spake of it unsought:
The shepherd-swain, who to allay the heat
  With which he saw his guest so troubled, thought
The tale which he was wonted to repeat—
  Of the two lovers—to each listener taught;
A history which many loved to hear,
He now, without reserve, 'gan tell the peer.

"How at Angelica's persuasive prayer,
  He to his farm had carried young Medore,
Grievously wounded with an arrow; where
  In little space she healed the angry sore.
But while she exercised this pious care,
  Love in her heart the lady wounded more,
And kindled from small spark so fierce a fire,
She burnt all over, restless with desire;

"Nor thinking she of mightiest king was born,
  Who ruled in the East, nor of her heritage,
Forced by too puissant love, had thought no scorn
  To be the consort of a poor foot-page."
His story done, to them in proof was borne
  The gem, which, in reward for harborage,
To her extended in that kind abode,
Angelica, at parting, had bestowed.

. . . .

In him, forthwith, such deadly hatred breed
  That bed, that house, that swain, he will not stay
Till the morn break, or till the dawn succeed,
  Whose twilight goes before approaching day.
In haste, Orlando takes his arms and steed,
  And to the deepest greenwood wends his way.
And when assured that he is there alone,
Gives utterance to his grief in shriek and groan.

Never from tears, never from sorrowing,
   He paused; nor found he peace by night or day;
He fled from town, in forest harboring,
   And in the open air on hard earth lay.
He marveled at himself, how such a spring
   Of water from his eyes could stream away,
And breath was for so many sobs supplied;
And thus oft-times, amid his mourning, cried:—

. . . .

«I am not—am not what I seem to sight:
   What Roland was, is dead and under ground,
Slain by that most ungrateful lady's spite,
   Whose faithlessness inflicted such a wound.
Divided from the flesh, I am his sprite,
   Which in this hell, tormented, walks its round,
To be, but in its shadow left above,
A warning to all such as trust in love.»

All night about the forest roved the count,
   And, at the break of daily light, was brought
By his unhappy fortune to the fount,
   Where his inscription young Medoro wrought.
To see his wrongs inscribed upon that mount
   Inflamed his fury so, in him was naught
But turned to hatred, frenzy, rage, and spite;
Nor paused he more, but bared his falchion bright,

Cleft through the writing; and the solid block,
   Into the sky, in tiny fragments sped.
Woe worth each sapling and that caverned rock
   Where Medore and Angelica were read!
So scathed, that they to shepherd or to flock
   Thenceforth shall never furnish shade or bed.
And that sweet fountain, late so clear and pure,
From such tempestous wrath was ill secure.

. . . .

So fierce his rage, so fierce his fury grew,
   That all obscured remained the warrior's sprite;
Nor, for forgetfulness, his sword he drew,
   Or wondrous deeds, I trow, had wrought the knight;
But neither this, nor bill, nor axe to hew,
   Was needed by Orlando's peerless might.
He of his prowess gave high proofs and full,
Who a tall pine uprooted at a pull.

He many others, with as little let
  As fennel, wall-wort-stem, or dill uptore;
And ilex, knotted oak, and fir upset,
  And beech and mountain ash, and elm-tree hoar.
He did what fowler, ere he spreads his net,
  Does, to prepare the champaign for his lore,
By stubble, rush, and nettle stalk; and broke,
Like these, old sturdy trees and stems of oak.

The shepherd swains, who hear the tumult nigh,
  Leaving their flocks beneath the greenwood tree,
Some here, some there, across the forest hie,
  And hurry thither, all, the cause to see.
But I have reached such point, my history,
  If I o'erpass this bound, may irksome be.
And I my story will delay to end
Rather than by my tediousness offend.

ARISTOPHANES

(B. C. 448–380?)

BY PAUL SHOREY

The birth-year of Aristophanes is placed about 448 B. C., on the ground that he is said to have been almost a boy when his first comedy was presented in 427. His last play, the ‹Plutus,› was produced in 388, and there is no evidence that he long survived this date. Little is known of his life beyond the allusions, in the Parabases of the ‹Acharnians,› ‹Knights,› and ‹Wasps,› to his prosecution by Cleon, to his own or his father's estate at Ægina, and to his premature baldness. He left three sons who also wrote comedies.

Aristophanes is the sole extant representative of the so-called Old Comedy of Athens; a form of dramatic art which developed obscurely under the shadow of Attic Tragedy in the first half of the fifth century B. C., out of the rustic revelry of the Phallic procession and Comus song of Dionysus, perhaps with some outside suggestions from the Megarian farce and its Sicilian offshoot, the mythological court comedy of Epicharmus. The chief note of this older comedy for the ancient critics was its unbridled license of direct personal satire and invective. Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes, says Horace, assailed with the utmost freedom any one who deserved to be branded with infamy. This old political Comedy was succeeded in the calmer times that followed the Peloponnesian War by the so-called Middle Comedy (390–320) of Alexis, Antiphanes, Strattis, and some minor men; which insensibly passed into the New Comedy (320–250) of Menander and Philemon, known to us in the reproductions of Terence. And this new comedy, which portrayed types of private life instead of satirizing noted persons by name, and which, as Aristotle says, produced laughter by innuendo rather than by scurrility, was preferred to the «terrible graces» of her elder sister by the gentle and refined Plutarch, or the critic who has usurped his name in the 'Comparison of Aristophanes and Menander.' The old Attic Comedy has been variously compared to Charivari, Punch, the comic opera of Offenbach, and a Parisian 'revue de fin d'année.' There is no good modern analogue. It is not our comedy of manners, plot, and situation; nor yet is it mere buffoonery. It is a peculiar mixture of broad political, social, and literary satire, and polemical discussion of large ideas, with the burlesque and licentious extravagances that were deemed the most acceptable service at the festival of the laughter-loving, tongue-loosening god of the vine.

ARISTOPHANES

The typical plan of an Aristophanic comedy is very simple. The protagonist undertakes in all apparent seriousness to give a local habitation and a body to some ingenious fancy, airy speculation, or bold metaphor: as for example, the procuring of a private peace for a citizen who is weary of the privations of war; or the establishment of a city in Cloud-Cuckoo-Land where the birds shall regulate things better than the featherless biped, man; or the restoration of the eyesight of the proverbially blind god of Wealth. The attention of the audience is at once enlisted for the semblance of a plot by which the scheme is put into execution. The design once effected, the remainder of the play is given over to a series of loosely connected scenes, ascending to a climax of absurdity, in which the consequences of the original happy thought are followed out with a Swiftian verisimilitude of piquant detail and a Rabelaisian license of uproarious mirth. It rests with the audience to take the whole as pure extravaganza, or as a *reductio ad absurdum* or playful defense of the conception underlying the original idea. In the intervals between the scenes, the chorus sing rollicking topical songs or bits of exquisite lyric, or in the name of the poet directly exhort and admonish the audience in the so-called Parabasis.

Of Aristophanes's first two plays, the ‹Banqueters of Hercules› (427), and the ‹Babylonians› (426), only fragments remain. The impolitic representation in the latter of the Athenian allies as branded Babylonian slaves was the ground of Cleon's attack in the courts upon Aristophanes, or Callistratus in whose name the play was produced.

The extant plays are the following:—

‹The Acharnians,› B. C. 425, shortly after the Athenian defeat at Delium. The worthy countryman, Dicæopolis, weary of being cooped up within the Long Walls, and disgusted with the shameless jobbery of the politicians, sends to Sparta for samples of peace (the Greek word means also libations) of different vintages. The Thirty Years' brand smells of nectar and ambrosia. He accepts it, concludes a private treaty for himself and friends, and proceeds to celebrate the rural Dionysia with wife and child, soothing, by an eloquent plea pronounced in tattered tragic vestments borrowed from Euripides, the anger of the chorus of choleric Acharnian charcoal burners, exasperated at the repeated devastation of their deme by the Spartans. He then opens a market, to which a jolly Bœotian brings the long-lost, thrice-desired Copaic eel; while a starveling Megarian, to the huge delight of the Athenian groundlings, sells his little daughters, disguised as pigs, for a peck of salt. Finally Dicæopolis goes forth to a wedding banquet, from which he returns very mellow in the company of two flute girls; while Lamachus, the head of the war party, issues forth to do battle with the Bœotians in the snow, and comes back with a bloody coxcomb. This play was successfully given in Greek by the students of the University of Pennsylvania in the spring of 1886, and interestingly discussed in the Nation of May 6th by Professor Gildersleeve.

‹The Knights,› B. C. 424: named from the chorus of young Athenian cavaliers who abet the sausage-seller, Agoracritus, egged on by the discontented family servants (the generals), Nicias and Demosthenes, to outbid with shameless flattery the rascally Paphlagonian steward, Cleon, and supplant him in the favor of their testy bean-fed old master, Demos (or People). At the close, Demos recovers his wits and his youth, and is revealed sitting enthroned in his glory in the good old Marathonian Athens of the Violet Crown. The prolongation of the billingsgate in the contest between Cleon and the sausage-seller grows wearisome to modern taste; but the portrait of the Demagogue is for all time.

‹The Clouds,› B. C. 423: an attack on Socrates, unfairly taken as an embodiment of the deleterious and unsettling «new learning,» both in the form of Sophistical rhetoric and «meteorological» speculation. Worthy Strepsiades, eager to find a new way to pay the debts in which the extravagance of his horse-racing son Pheidippides has involved him, seeks to enter the youth as a student in the Thinking-shop or Reflectory of Socrates, that he may learn to make the worse appear the better reason, and so baffle his creditors before a jury. The young man, after much demur and the ludicrous failure of his father, who at first matriculates in his stead, consents. He listens to the pleas of the just and unjust argument in behalf of the old and new education, and becomes himself such a proficient that he demonstrates, in flawless reasoning, that Euripides is a better poet than Æschylus, and that a boy is justified in beating his father for affirming the contrary. Strepsiades thereupon, cured of his folly, undertakes a subtle investigation into the timbers of the roof of the Reflectory, with a view to smoking out the corrupters of youth. Many of the songs sung by or to the clouds, the patron deities of Socrates's misty lore, are extremely beautiful. Socrates is made to allude to these attacks of comedy by Plato in the ‹Apology,› and, on his last day in prison, in the ‹Phædo.› In the ‹Symposium› or ‹Banquet› of Plato, Aristophanes bursts in upon a company of friends with whom Socrates is feasting, and drinks with them till morning; while Socrates forces him and the tragic poet Agathon, both of them very sleepy, to admit that the true dramatic artist will excel in both tragedy and comedy.

‹The Wasps,› B. C. 422: a *jeu d'esprit* turning on the Athenian passion for litigation. Young Bdelucleon (hate-Cleon) can keep his old father Philocleon (love-Cleon) out of the courts only by instituting a private court in his own house. The first culprit, the house-dog, is tried for stealing a Sicilian cheese, and acquitted by Philocleon's mistaking the urn of acquittal for that of condemnation. The old man is inconsolable at the first escape of a victim from his clutches; but finally, renouncing his folly, takes lessons from his exquisite of a son in the manners and deportment of a fine gentleman. He then attends a dinner party, where he betters his instructions with comic exaggeration and returns home in high feather, singing tipsy catches and assaulting the watch on his way. The chorus of Wasps, the visible embodiment of a metaphor found also in Plato's ‹Republic,› symbolizes the sting used by the Athenian jurymen to make the rich disgorge a portion of their gathered honey. The ‹Plaideurs› of Racine is an imitation of this play; and the *motif* of the committal of the dog is borrowed by Ben Jonson in the ‹Staple of News.›

‹The Peace,› B. C. 421: in support of the Peace of Nicias, ratified soon afterward (Grote's ‹History of Greece,› Vol. vi., page 492). Trygæus, an honest vine-dresser yearning for his farm, in parody of the Bellerophon of Euripides, ascends to heaven on a dung-beetle. He there hauls Peace from the bottom of the well into which she had been cast by Ares, and brings her home in triumph to Greece, when she inaugurates a reign of plenty and uproarious jollity, and celebrates the nuptials of Trygæus and her handmaid Opora (Harvest-home).

‹The Birds,› B. C. 414. Peisthetærus (Plausible) and Euelpides (Hopeful), whose names and deeds are perhaps a satire on the unbounded ambition that brought ruin on Athens at Syracuse, journey to Birdland and persuade King Hoopoe to induce the birds to build Nephelococcygia or Cloud-Cuckoo-Burgh in the air between the gods and men, starve out the gods with a «Melian famine,» and rule the world themselves. The gods, their supplies of incense cut off, are forced to treat, and Peisthetærus receives in marriage Basileia (Sovereignty), the daughter of Zeus. The *mise en scène*, with the gorgeous plumage of the bird-chorus, must have been very impressive, and many of the choric songs are exceedingly beautiful. There is an interesting account by Professor Jebb in the Fortnightly Review (Vol. xli.) of a performance of ‹The Birds› at Cambridge in 1884.

Two plays, B. C. 411: (1) at the Lenæa, ‹The Lysistrata,› in which the women of Athens and Sparta by a secession from bed and board compel their husbands to end the war; (2) The ‹Thesmophoriazusæ› or Women's Festival of Demeter, a licentious but irresistibly funny assault upon Euripides. The tragedian, learning that the women in council assembled are debating on the punishment due to his misogyny, implores the effeminate poet Agathon to intercede for him. That failing, he dispatches his kinsman Mnesilochus, disguised with singed beard and woman's robes, a sight to shake the midriff of despair with laughter, to plead his cause. The advocate's excess of zeal betrays him; he is arrested: and the remainder of the play is occupied by the ludicrous devices, borrowed or parodied from well-known Euripidean tragedies, by which the poet endeavors to rescue his intercessor.

‹The Frogs,› B. C. 405, in the brief respite of hope between the victory of Arginusæ and the final overthrow of Athens at Ægospotami. Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides are dead. The minor bards are a puny folk, and Dionysus is resolved to descend to Hades in quest of a truly creative poet, one capable of a figure like «my star god's glow-worm,» or «His honor rooted in dishonor stood.» After many surprising adventures by the way, and in the outer precincts of the underworld, accompanied by his Sancho Panza, Xanthias, he arrives at the court of Pluto just in time to be chosen arbitrator of the great contest between Æschylus and Euripides for the tragic throne in Hades. The comparisons and parodies of the styles of Æschylus and Euripides that follow, constitute, in spite of their comic exaggeration, one of the most entertaining and discriminating chapters of literary criticism extant, and give us an exalted idea of the intelligence of the audience that appreciated them. Dionysus decides for Æschylus, and leads him back in triumph to the upper world.

The ‹Ecclesiazusæ› or ‹Ladies in Parliament,› B. C. 393: apparently a satire on the communistic theories which must have been current in the discussions of the schools before they found definite expression in Plato's ‹Republic.› The ladies of Athens rise betimes, purloin their husbands' hats and canes, pack the Assembly, and pass a measure to intrust the reins of government to women. An extravagant and licentious communism is the result.

The ‹Plutus,› B. C. 388: a second and much altered edition of a play represented for the first time in 408. With the ‹Ecclesiazusæ› it marks the transition to the Middle Comedy, there being no parabasis, and little of the exuberant *verve* of the older pieces. The blind god of Wealth recovers his eyesight by sleeping in the temple of Æsculapius, and proceeds to distribute the gifts of fortune more equitably.

The assignment of the dates and restoration of the plots of the thirty-two lost plays, of which a few not very interesting fragments remain, belong to the domain of conjectural erudition.

Aristophanes has been regarded by some critics as a grave moral censor, veiling his high purpose behind the grinning mask of comedy; by others as a buffoon of genius, whose only object was to raise a laugh. Both sides of the question are ingeniously and copiously argued in Browning's ‹Aristophanes' Apology›; and there is a judicious summing up of the case of Aristophanes *vs.* Euripides in Professor Jebb's lectures on Greek poetry. The soberer view seems to be that while predominantly a comic artist, obeying the instincts of his genius, he did frequently make his comedy the vehicle of an earnest conservative polemic against the new spirit of the age in Literature, Philosophy, and Politics. He pursued Euripides with relentless ridicule because his dramatic motives lent themselves to parody, and his lines were on the lips of every theatre-goer; but also because he believed that Euripides had spoiled the old, stately, heroic art of Æschylus and Sophocles by incongruous infusions of realism and sentimentalism, and had debased the «large utterance of the early gods» by an unhallowed mixture of colloquialism, dialectic, and chicane.

Aristophanes travestied the teachings of Socrates because his ungainly figure, and the oddity (*atopia*) attributed to him even by Plato, made him an excellent butt; yet also because he felt strongly that it was better for the young Athenian to spend his days in the Palæstra, or «where the elm-tree whispers to the plane,» than in filing a contentious tongue on barren logomachies. That Socrates in fact discussed only ethical problems, and disclaimed all sympathy with speculations about things above our heads, made no difference: he was the best human embodiment of a hateful educational error. And similarly the assault upon Cleon, the «pun-pelleting of demagogues from Pnux,» was partly due to the young aristocrat's instinctive aversion to the coarse popular leader, and to the broad mark which the latter presented to the shafts of satire, but equally, perhaps, to a genuine patriotic revolt at the degradation of Athenian politics in the hands of the successors of Pericles.

But Aristophanes's ideas interest us less than his art and humor. We have seen the nature of his plots. In such a topsy-turvy world there is little opportunity for nice delineation of character. His personages are mainly symbols or caricatures. Yet they are vividly if broadly sketched, and genuine touches of human nature lend verisimilitude to their most improbable actions. One or two traditional comic types appear for the first time, apparently, on his stage: the alternately cringing and familiar slave or valet of comedy, in his Xanthias and Karion; and in Dicæopolis, Strepsiades, Demos, Trygæus, and Dionysus, the sensual, jovial, shrewd, yet naïve and credulous middle-aged *bourgeois gentilhomme* or 'Sganarelle,' who is not ashamed to avow his poltroonery, and yet can, on occasion, maintain his rights with sturdy independence.

But the chief attraction of Aristophanes is the abounding comic force and *verve* of his style. It resembles an impetuous torrent, whose swift rush purifies in its flow the grossness and obscenity inseparable from the origin of comedy, and buoys up and sweeps along on the current of fancy and improvisation the chaff and dross of vulgar jests, puns, scurrilous personalities, and cheap «gags,» allowing no time for chilling reflections or criticism. Jests which are singly feeble combine to induce a mood of extravagant hilarity when huddled upon us with such «impossible conveyance.» This *vivida vis animi* can hardly be reproduced in a translation, and disappears altogether in an attempt at an abstract enumeration of the poet's inexhaustible devices for comic effect. He himself repeatedly boasts of the fertility of his invention, and claims to have discarded the coarse farce of his predecessors for something more worthy of the refined intelligence of his clever audience. Yet it must be acknowledged that much even of his wit is the mere filth-throwing of a naughty boy; or at best the underbred jocularity of the «funny column,» the topical song, or the minstrel show. There are puns on the names of notable personages; a grotesque, fantastic, punning fauna, flora, and geography of Greece; a constant succession of surprises effected by the sudden substitution of low or incongruous terms in proverbs, quotations, and legal or religious formulas; scenes in dialect, scenes of excellent fooling in the vein of Uncle Toby and the Clown, girds at the audience, personalities that for us have lost their point,—about Cleonymus the caster-away of shields, or Euripides's herb-selling mother,—and everywhere unstinted service to the great gods Priapus and Cloacina.

A finer instrument of comic effect is the parody. The countless parodies of the lyric and dramatic literature of Greece are perhaps the most remarkable testimony extant to the intelligence of an Athenian audience. Did they infallibly catch the allusion when Dicæopolis welcomed back to the Athenian fish-market the long-lost Copaic eel in high Æschylean strain,—

«Of fifty nymphs Copaic alderliefest queen,»

and then, his voice breaking with the intolerable pathos of Admetus's farewell to the dying Alcestis, added,

«Yea, even in death
Thou'lt bide with me, embalmed and beet-bestewed»?

Did they recognize the blasphemous Pindaric pun in «Helle's holy straits,» for a tight place, and appreciate all the niceties of diction, metre, and dramatic art discriminated in the comparison between Æschylus and Euripides in the 'Frogs'? At any rate, no Athenian could miss the fun of Dicæopolis (like Hector's baby) «scared at the dazzling plume and nodding crest» of the swashbuckler Lamachus, of Philocleon, clinging to his ass's belly like Odysseus escaping under the ram from the Cyclops's cave; of the baby in the Thesmophoriazusæ seized as a Euripidean hostage, and turning out a wine bottle in swaddling-clothes; of light-foot Iris in the rôle of a saucy, frightened soubrette; of the heaven-defying Æschylean Prometheus hiding under an umbrella from the thunderbolts of Zeus. And they must have felt instinctively what only a laborious erudition reveals to us, the sudden subtle modulations of the colloquial comic verse into mock-heroic travesty of high tragedy or lyric.

Euripides, the chief victim of Aristophanes's genius for parody, was so burlesqued that his best known lines became by-words, and his most ardent admirers, the very Balaustions and Euthukleses, must have grinned when they heard them, like a pair of augurs. If we conceive five or six Shakespearean comedies filled from end to end with ancient Pistols hallooing to «pampered jades of Asia,» and Dr. Caiuses chanting of «a thousand vagrom posies,» we may form some idea of Aristophanes's handling of the notorious lines—

«The tongue has sworn, the mind remains unsworn.»
«Thou lovest life, thy sire loves it too.»
«Who knows if life and death be truly one?»

But the charm of Aristophanes does not lie in any of these things singly, but in the combination of ingenious and paradoxical fancy with an inexhaustible flow of apt language by which they are held up and borne out. His personages are ready to make believe anything. Nothing surprises them long. They enter into the spirit of each new conceit, and can always discover fresh analogies to bear it out. The very plots of his plays are realized metaphors or embodied conceits. And the same concrete vividness of imagination is displayed in single scenes and episodes. The Better and the Worse Reason plead the causes of the old and new education in person. Cleon and Brasidas are the pestles with which War proposes to bray Greece in a mortar; the triremes of Athens in council assembled declare that they will rot in the docks sooner than yield their virginity to musty, fusty Hyperbolus. The fair cities of Greece stand about waiting for the recovery of Peace from her Well, with dreadful black eyes, poor things; Armisticia and Harvest-Home tread the stage in the flesh, and Nincompoop and Defraudation are among the gods.

The special metaphor or conceit of each play attracts appropriate words and images, and creates a distinct atmosphere of its own. In the 'Knights' the air fairly reeks with the smell of leather and the tanyard. The 'Birds' transport us to a world of trillings and pipings, and beaks and feathers. There is a buzzing and a humming and a stinging throughout the 'Wasps.' The 'Clouds' drip with mist, and are dim with aërial vaporous effects.

Aristophanes was the original inventor of Bob Acres's style of oath — the so-called referential or sentimental swearing. Dicæopolis invokes Ecbatana when Shamartabas struts upon the stage. Socrates in the 'Clouds' swears by the everlasting vapors. King Hoopoe's favorite oath is «Odds nets and birdlime.» And the vein of humor that lies in over-ingenious, elaborate, and sustained metaphor was first worked in these comedies. All these excellences are summed up in the incomparable wealth and flexibility of his vocabulary. He has a Shakespearean mastery of the technicalities of every art and mystery, an appalling command of billingsgate and of the language of the cuisine, and would tire Falstaff and Prince Hal with base comparisons. And not content with the existing resources of the Greek vocabulary, he coins grotesque or beautiful compounds,—exquisite epithets like «Botruodōré» (bestower of the vine), «heliomanes» (drunk-with-sunlight), «myriad-flagoned phrases,» untranslatable «portmanteaus» like «plouthugieia» (health-and-wealthfulness), and Gargantuan agglomerations of syllables like the portentous *olla podrida* at the end of the 'Ecclesiazusæ.'

The great comic writer, as the example of Molière proves, need not be a poet. But the mere overflow of careless poetic power which is manifested by Aristophanes would have sufficed to set up any ordinary tragedian or lyrist. In plastic mastery of language only two Greek writers can vie with him, — Plato and Homer. In the easy grace and native harmony of his verse he outsings all the tragedians, even that Æschylus whom he praised as the man who had written the most exquisite songs of any poet of the time. In his blank verse he easily strikes every note, from that of the urbane, unaffected, colloquial Attic, to parody of high or subtle tragic diction hardly distinguishable from its model. He can adapt his metres to the expression of every shade of feeling. He has short, snapping, fiery trochees, like sparks from their own holm oak, to represent the choler of the Acharnians; eager, joyous glyconics to bundle up a sycophant and hustle him off the stage, or for the young knights of Athens celebrating Phormio's sea fights, and chanting, horse-taming Poseidon, Pallas, guardian of the State, and Victory, companion of the dance; the quickstep march of the trochaic tetrameter to tell how the Attic wasps, true children of the soil, charged the Persians at Marathon; and above all — the chosen vehicle of his wildest conceits, his most audacious fancies, and his strongest appeals to the better judgment of the citizens — the anapæstic tetrameter, that «resonant and triumphant» metre of which even Mr. Swinburne's anapæsts can reproduce only a faint and far-off echo.

But he has more than the opulent diction and the singing voice of the poet. He has the key to fairy-land, a feeling for nature which we thought romantic and modern, and in his lyrics the native wood-notes wild of his own ‹Mousa lochmaia› (the muse of the coppice). The chorus of the Mystæ in the ‹Frogs,› the rustic idyl of the ‹Peace,› the songs of the girls in the ‹Lysistrata,› the call of the nightingale, the hymns of the ‹Clouds,› the speech of the «Just Reason,» and the grand chorus of birds, reveal Aristophanes as not only the first comic writer of Greece, but as one of the very greatest of her poets.

Among the many editions of Aristophanes, those most useful to the student and the general reader are doubtless the text edited by Bergk (2 vols., 1867), and the translations of the five most famous plays by John Hookham Frere, to be found in his complete works.

Paul Shorey

THE ORIGIN OF THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

From ‹The Acharnians›: Frere's Translation

DICÆOPOLIS

Be not surprised, most excellent spectators,
If I that am a beggar have presumed
To claim an audience upon public matters,
Even in a comedy; for comedy
Is conversant in all the rules of justice,
And can distinguish betwixt right and wrong.

The words I speak are bold, but just and true.
Cleon at least cannot accuse me now,
That I defame the city before strangers,
For this is the Lenæan festival,
And here we meet, all by ourselves alone;
No deputies are arrived as yet with tribute,
No strangers or allies: but here we sit
A chosen sample, clean as sifted corn,
With our own denizens as a kind of chaff.

First, I detest the Spartans most extremely;
And wish that Neptune, the Tænarian deity,
Would bury them in their houses with his earthquakes.
For I've had losses—losses, let me tell ye,
Like other people; vines cut down and injured.
But among friends (for only friends are here),
Why should we blame the Spartans for all this?
For people of ours, some people of our own,—
Some people from among us here, I mean:
But not the People (pray, remember that);
I never said the People, but a pack
Of paltry people, mere pretended citizens,
Base counterfeits,—went laying informations,
And making a confiscation of the jerkins
Imported here from Megara; pigs, moreover,
Pumpkins, and pecks of salt, and ropes of onions,
Were voted to be merchandise from Megara,
Denounced, and seized, and sold upon the spot.

Well, these might pass, as petty local matters.
But now, behold, some doughty drunken youths
Kidnap, and carry away from Megara,
The courtesan, Simætha. Those of Megara,

In hot retaliation, seize a brace
Of equal strumpets, hurried forth perforce
From Dame Aspasia's house of recreation.
So this was the beginning of the war,
All over Greece, owing to these three strumpets.
For Pericles, like an Olympian Jove,
With all his thunder and his thunderbolts,
Began to storm and lighten dreadfully,
Alarming all the neighborhood of Greece;
And made decrees, drawn up like drinking songs,
In which it was enacted and concluded
That the Megarians should remain excluded
From every place where commerce was transacted,
With all their ware—like «old Care» in the ballad:
And this decree, by land and sea, was valid.

Then the Megarians, being all half starved,
Desired the Spartans to desire of us
Just to repeal those laws; the laws I mentioned,
Occasioned by the stealing of those strumpets.
And so they begged and prayed us several times;
And we refused: and so they went to war.

THE POET'S APOLOGY

From ‹The Acharnians›: Frere's Translation

Our poet has never as yet
Esteemed it proper or fit
To detain you with a long
Encomiastic song
On his own superior wit;
But being abused and accused,
And attacked of late
As a foe of the State,
He makes an appeal in his proper defense,
To your voluble humor and temper and sense,
With the following plea:
Namely, that he
Never attempted or ever meant
To scandalize
In any wise
Your mighty imperial government.
Moreover he says,
That in various ways

He presumes to have merited honor and praise;
Exhorting you still to stick to your rights,
And no more to be fooled with rhetorical flights;
Such as of late each envoy tries
On the behalf of your allies,
That come to plead their cause before ye,
With fulsome phrase, and a foolish story
Of «violet crowns» and «Athenian glory,»
With «sumptuous Athens» at every word:
«Sumptuous Athens» is always heard;
«Sumptuous» ever, a suitable phrase
For a dish of meat or a beast at graze.
He therefore affirms
In confident terms,
That his active courage and earnest zeal
Have usefully served your common weal:
He has openly shown
The style and tone
Of your democracy ruling abroad,
He has placed its practices on record;
The tyrannical arts, the knavish tricks,
That poison all your politics.
Therefore shall we see, this year,
The allies with tribute arriving here,
Eager and anxious all to behold
Their steady protector, the bard so bold;
The bard, they say, that has dared to speak,
To attack the strong, to defend the weak.
His fame in foreign climes is heard,
And a singular instance lately occurred.
It occurred in the case of the Persian king,
Sifting and cross-examining
The Spartan envoys. He demanded
Which of the rival States commanded
The Grecian seas? He asked them next
(Wishing to see them more perplexed)
Which of the two contending powers
Was chiefly abused by this bard of ours?
For he said, «Such a bold, so profound an adviser
By dint of abuse would render them wiser,
More active and able; and briefly that they
Must finally prosper and carry the day.»
Now mark the Lacedæmonian guile!
Demanding an insignificant isle!

«Ægina,» they say, «for a pledge of peace,
As a means to make all jealousy cease.»
Meanwhile their privy design and plan
Is solely to gain this marvelous man—
Knowing his influence on your fate—
By obtaining a hold on his estate
Situate in the isle aforesaid.
Therefore there needs to be no more said.
You know their intention, and know that you know it:
You'll keep to your island, and stick to the poet.
And he for his part
Will practice his art
With a patriot heart,
With the honest views
That he now pursues,
And fair buffoonery and abuse:
Not rashly bespattering, or basely beflattering,
Not pimping, or puffing, or acting the ruffian;
Not sneaking or fawning;
But openly scorning
All menace and warning,
All bribes and suborning:
He will do his endeavor on your behalf;
He will teach you to think, he will teach you to laugh.
So Cleon again and again may try;
I value him not, nor fear him, I!
His rage and rhetoric I defy.
His impudence, his politics,
His dirty designs, his rascally tricks,
No stain of abuse on me shall fix.
Justice and right, in his despite,
Shall aid and attend me, and do me right:
With these to friend, I ne'er will bend,
Nor descend
To a humble tone
(Like his own),
As a sneaking loon,
A knavish, slavish, poor poltroon.

THE APPEAL OF THE CHORUS

From ‹The Knights›: Frere's Translation

If a veteran author had wished to engage
Our assistance to-day, for a speech from the stage,
We scarce should have granted so bold a request:
But this author of ours, as the bravest and best,
Deserves an indulgence denied to the rest,
For the courage and vigor, the scorn and the hate,
With which he encounters the pests of the State;
A thoroughbred seaman, intrepid and warm,
Steering outright, in the face of the storm.

But now for the gentle reproaches he bore
On the part of his friends, for refraining before
To embrace the profession, embarking for life
In theatrical storms and poetical strife.

He begs us to state that for reasons of weight
He has lingered so long and determined so late.
For he deemed the achievements of comedy hard,
The boldest attempt of a desperate bard!
The Muse he perceived was capricious and coy;
Though many were courting her, few could enjoy.
And he saw without reason, from season to season,
Your humor would shift, and turn poets adrift,
Requiting old friends with unkindness and treason,
Discarded in scorn as exhausted and worn.

Seeing Magnes's fate, who was reckoned of late
For the conduct of comedy captain and head;
That so oft on the stage, in the flower of his age,
Had defeated the Chorus his rivals had led;
With his sounds of all sort, that were uttered in sport,
With whims and vagaries unheard of before,
With feathers and wings, and a thousand gay things,
That in frolicsome fancies his Choruses wore—
When his humor was spent, did your temper relent,
To requite the delight that he gave you before?
We beheld him displaced, and expelled and disgraced,
When his hair and his wit were grown aged and hoar.

Then he saw, for a sample, the dismal example
Of noble Cratinus so splendid and ample,
Full of spirit and blood, and enlarged like a flood;

Whose copious current tore down with its torrent,
Oaks, ashes, and yew, with the ground where they grew,
And his rivals to boot, wrenched up by the root;
And his personal foes, who presumed to oppose,
All drowned and abolished, dispersed and demolished,
And drifted headlong, with a deluge of song.

And his airs and his tunes, and his songs and lampoons,
Were recited and sung by the old and the young:
At our feasts and carousals, what poet but he?
And «The fair Amphibribe» and «The Sycophant Tree,»
«Masters and masons and builders of verse!»
Those were the tunes that all tongues could rehearse;
But since in decay you have cast him away,
  Stript of his stops and his musical strings,
Battered and shattered, a broken old instrument,
  Shoved out of sight among rubbishy things.
His garlands are faded, and what he deems worst,
His tongue and his palate are parching with thirst.

And now you may meet him alone in the street,
    Wearied and worn, tattered and torn,
All decayed and forlorn, in his person and dress,
Whom his former success should exempt from distress,
With subsistence at large at the general charge,
And a seat with the great at the table of State,
There to feast every day and preside at the play
In splendid apparel, triumphant and gay.

Seeing Crates, the next, always teased and perplexed,
With your tyrannous temper tormented and vexed;
That with taste and good sense, without waste or expense,
From his snug little hoard, provided your board
With a delicate treat, economic and neat.
Thus hitting or missing, with crowns or with hissing,
    Year after year he pursued his career,
For better or worse, till he finished his course.

These precedents held him in long hesitation;
He replied to his friends, with a just observation,
«That a seaman in regular order is bred
To the oar, to the helm, and to look out ahead;
With diligent practice has fixed in his mind
The signs of the weather, and changes of wind.
And when every point of the service is known,
Undertakes the command of a ship of his own.»

For reasons like these,
If your judgment agrees
That he did not embark
Like an ignorant spark,
Or a troublesome lout,
To puzzle and bother, and blunder about,
Give him a shout,
At his first setting out!
And all pull away
With a hearty huzza
For success to the play!
Send him away,
Smiling and gay,
Shining and florid,
With his bald forehead!

THE CLOUD CHORUS

From ‹The Clouds›: Andrew Lang's Translation

SOCRATES SPEAKS

HITHER, come hither, ye Clouds renowned, and unveil yourselves here;
Come, though ye dwell on the sacred crests of Olympian snow,
Or whether ye dance with the Nereid Choir in the gardens clear,
Or whether your golden urns are dipped in Nile's overflow,
Or whether you dwell by Mæotis mere
Or the snows of Mimas, arise! appear!
And hearken to us, and accept our gifts ere ye rise and go.

THE CLOUDS SING

Immortal Clouds from the echoing shore
Of the father of streams from the sounding sea,
Dewy and fleet, let us rise and soar;
Dewy and gleaming and fleet are we!
Let us look on the tree-clad mountain-crest,
On the sacred earth where the fruits rejoice,
On the waters that murmur east and west,
On the tumbling sea with his moaning voice.
For unwearied glitters the Eye of the Air,
And the bright rays gleam;
Then cast we our shadows of mist, and fare
In our deathless shapes to glance everywhere
From the height of the heaven, on the land and air,
And the Ocean Stream.

Let us on, ye Maidens that bring the Rain,
  Let us gaze on Pallas's citadel,
In the country of Cecrops fair and dear,
  The mystic land of the holy cell,
  Where the Rites unspoken securely dwell,
And the gifts of the gods that know not stain,
  And a people of mortals that know not fear.
For the temples tall and the statues fair,
And the feasts of the gods are holiest there;
The feasts of Immortals, the chaplets of flowers,
  And the Bromian mirth at the coming of spring,
And the musical voices that fill the hours,
  And the dancing feet of the maids that sing!

GRAND CHORUS OF BIRDS

From ‹The Birds›: Swinburne's Translation

Come on then, ye dwellers by nature in darkness, and like to the leaves' generations,
That are little of might, that are molded of mire, unenduring and shadowlike nations,
Poor plumeless ephemerals, comfortless mortals, as visions of shadows fast fleeing,
Lift up your mind unto us that are deathless, and dateless the date of our being;
Us, children of heaven, us, ageless for aye, us, all of whose thoughts are eternal:
That ye may from henceforth, having heard of us all things aright as to matters supernal,
Of the being of birds, and beginning of gods, and of streams, and the dark beyond reaching,
Trustfully knowing aright, in my name bid Prodicus pack with his preaching!
It was Chaos and Night at the first, and the blackness of darkness, and Hell's broad border,
Earth was not, nor air, neither heaven; when in depths of the womb of the dark without order
First thing, first-born of the black-plumed Night, was a wind-egg hatched in her bosom,
Whence timely with seasons revolving again sweet Love burst out as a blossom,
Gold wings glittering forth of his back, like whirlwinds gustily turning.
He, after his wedlock with Chaos, whose wings are of darkness, in Hell broad-burning,

For his nestlings begat him the race of us first, and upraised us to light new-lighted.
And before this was not the race of the gods, until all things by Love were united:
And of kind united in kind with communion of nature the sky and the sea are
Brought forth, and the earth, and the race of the gods everlasting and blest. So that we are
Far away the most ancient of all things blest. And that we are of Love's generation
There are manifest manifold signs. We have wings, and with us have the Loves habitation;
And manifold fair young folk that forswore love once, ere the bloom of them ended,
Have the men that pursued and desired them subdued by the help of us only befriended,
With such baits as a quail, a flamingo, a goose, or a cock's comb staring and splendid.
All best good things that befall men come from us birds, as is plain to all reason:
For first we proclaim and make known to them spring, and the winter and autumn in season;
Bid sow, when the crane starts clanging for Afric in shrill-voiced emigrant number,
And calls to the pilot to hang up his rudder again for the season and slumber;
And then weave a cloak for Orestes the thief, lest he strip men of theirs if it freezes.
And again thereafter the kite reappearing announces a change in the breezes.
And that here is the season for shearing your sheep of their spring wool. Then does the swallow
Give you notice to sell your great-coat, and provide something light for the heat that's to follow.
Thus are we as Ammon or Delphi unto you, Dodona, nay, Phœbus Apollo.
For, as first ye come all to get auguries of birds, even such is in all things your carriage,
Be the matter a matter of trade, or of earning your bread, or of any one's marriage.
And all things ye lay to the charge of a bird that belong to discerning prediction:
Winged fame is a bird, as you reckon; you sneeze, and the sign's as a bird for conviction;

All tokens are «birds» with you — sounds, too, and lackeys and donkeys. Then must it not follow
That we are to you all as the manifest godhead that speaks in prophetic Apollo?

A RAINY DAY ON THE FARM

From ‹The Peace›: Frere's Translation

How sweet it is to see the new-sown cornfield fresh and even,
With blades just springing from the soil that only ask a shower from heaven.
Then, while kindly rains are falling, indolently to rejoice,
Till some worthy neighbor calling, cheers you with his hearty voice.
Well, with weather such as this, let us hear, Trygæus tell us
What should you and I be doing? You're the king of us good fellows.
Since it pleases heaven to prosper your endeavors, friend, and mine,
Let us have a merry meeting, with some friendly talk and wine.
In the vineyard there's your lout, hoeing in the slop and mud —
Send the wench and call him out, this weather he can do no good.
Dame, take down two pints of meal, and do some fritters in your way;
Boil some grain and stir it in, and let us have those figs, I say.
Send a servant to my house, — any one that you can spare, —
Let him fetch a beestings pudding, two gherkins, and the pies of hare:
There should be four of them in all, if the cat has left them right;
We heard her racketing and tearing round the larder all last night.
Boy, bring three of them to us, — take the other to my father:
Cut some myrtle for our garlands, sprigs in flower or blossoms rather.
Give a shout upon the way to Charinades our neighbor,
To join our drinking bout to-day, since heaven is pleased to bless our labor.

THE HARVEST

From ‹The Peace›: Translation in the Quarterly Review

Oh, 'tis sweet, when fields are ringing
With the merry cricket's singing,
Oft to mark with curious eye
If the vine-tree's time be nigh:
Here is now the fruit whose birth
Cost a throe to Mother Earth.
Sweet it is, too, to be telling,
How the luscious figs are swelling;
Then to riot without measure
In the rich, nectareous treasure,
While our grateful voices chime, —
Happy season! blessed time.

THE CALL TO THE NIGHTINGALE

From ‹The Birds›: Frere's Translation

Awake! awake!
Sleep no more, my gentle mate!
With your tiny tawny bill,
Wake the tuneful echo shrill,
On vale or hill;
Or in her airy rocky seat,
Let her listen and repeat
The tender ditty that you tell,
The sad lament,
The dire event,
To luckless Itys that befell.
Thence the strain
Shall rise again,
And soar amain,
Up to the lofty palace gate
Where mighty Apollo sits in state
In Jove's abode, with his ivory lyre,
Hymning aloud to the heavenly choir,
While all the gods shall join with thee
In a celestial symphony.

THE BUILDING OF CLOUD-CUCKOO-TOWN

From ‹The Birds›: Frere's Translation

[*Enter Messenger, quite out of breath, and speaking in short snatches.*]

Messenger — Where is he? Where? Where is he? Where? Where is he? — The president Peisthetairus?

Peisthetairus [*coolly*] — Here am I.

Mess. [*in a gasp of breath*] — Your fortification's finished.

Peis. — Well! that's well.

Mess. — A most amazing, astonishing work it is!
So that Theagenes and Proxenides
Might flourish and gasconade and prance away
Quite at their ease, both of them four-in-hand,
Driving abreast upon the breadth of wall,
Each in his own new chariot.

Peis. — You surprise me.

Mess. — And the height (for I made the measurement myself)
Is exactly a hundred fathoms.

Peis.— Heaven and earth!
How could it be? such a mass! who could have built it?
Mess.—The Birds; no creature else, no foreigners,
Egyptian bricklayers, workmen or masons.
But they themselves, alone, by their own efforts,—
(Even to my surprise, as an eye-witness)
The Birds, I say, completed everything:
There came a body of thirty thousand cranes,
(I won't be positive, there might be more)
With stones from Africa in their craws and gizzards,
Which the stone-curlews and stone-chatterers
Worked into shape and finished. The sand-martens
And mud-larks, too, were busy in their department,
Mixing the mortar, while the water-birds,
As fast as it was wanted, brought the water
To temper and work it.
Peis. [*in a fidget*]— But who served the masons
Who did you get to carry it?
Mess.— To carry it?
Of course, the carrion crows and carrying pigeons.
Peis. [*in a fuss, which he endeavors to conceal*]—
Yes! yes! but after all, to load your hods,
How did you manage that?
Mess.— Oh, capitally,
I promise you. There were the geese, all barefoot
Trampling the mortar, and when all was ready
They handed it into the hods, so cleverly,
With their flat feet!
Peis. [*a bad joke, as a vent for irritation*]—
They footed it, you mean—
Come; it was handily done though, I confess.
Mess.—Indeed, I assure you, it was a sight to see them;
And trains of ducks there were, clambering the ladders
With their duck legs, like bricklayers' 'prentices,
All dapper and handy, with their little trowels.
Peis.— In fact, then, it's no use engaging foreigners;
Mere folly and waste, we've all within ourselves.
Ah, well now, come! But about the woodwork? Heh!
Who were the carpenters? Answer me that!
Mess.—The woodpeckers, of course: and there they were,
Laboring upon the gates, driving and banging,
With their hard hatchet-beaks, and such a din,
Such a clatter, as they made, hammering and hacking,
In a perpetual peal, pelting away

Like shipwrights, hard at work in the arsenal.
And now their work is finished, gates and all,
Staples and bolts, and bars and everything;
The sentries at their posts; patrols appointed;
The watchman in the barbican; the beacons
Ready prepared for lighting; all their signals
Arranged—but I'll step out, just for a moment,
To wash my hands. You'll settle all the rest.

CHORUS OF WOMEN

From the ‹Thesmophoriazusæ›: Collins's Translation

They're always abusing the women,
As a terrible plague to men:
They say we're the root of all evil,
And repeat it again and again;
Of war, and quarrels, and bloodshed,
All mischief, be what it may!
And pray, then, why do you marry us,
If we're all the plagues you say?
And why do you take such care of us,
And keep us so safe at home,
And are never easy a moment
If ever we chance to roam?
When you ought to be thanking heaven
That your Plague is out of the way,
You all keep fussing and fretting—
«Where is *my* Plague to-day?»
If a Plague peeps out of the window,
Up go the eyes of men;
If she hides, then they all keep staring
Until she looks out again.

CHORUS OF MYSTÆ IN HADES

From ‹The Frogs›: Frere's Translation

CHORUS [*shouting and singing*]

Iacchus! Iacchus! Ho!
Iacchus! Iacchus! Ho!

Xanthias—There, master, there they are, the initiated
All sporting about as he told us we should find 'em.
They're singing in praise of Bacchus like Diagoras.

Bacchus— Indeed, and so they are; but we'll keep quiet
Till we make them out a little more distinctly.

CHORUS [*song*]

Mighty Bacchus! Holy Power!
Hither at the wonted hour
Come away,
Come away,
With the wanton holiday,
Where the revel uproar leads
To the mystic holy meads,
Where the frolic votaries fly,
With a tipsy shout and cry;
Flourishing the Thyrsus high,
Flinging forth, alert and airy,
To the sacred old vagary,
The tumultuous dance and song,
Sacred from the vulgar throng;
Mystic orgies that are known
To the votaries alone—
To the mystic chorus solely—
Secret—unrevealed—and holy.

Xan.—O glorious virgin, daughter of the Goddess!
What a scent of roasted griskin reached my senses!

Bac.— Keep quiet—and watch for a chance of a piece of the haslets.

CHORUS [*song*]

Raise the fiery torches high!
Bacchus is approaching nigh,
Like the planet of the morn
Breaking with the hoary dawn
On the dark solemnity—
There they flash upon the sight;
All the plain is blazing bright,
Flushed and overflown with light:
Age has cast his years away,
And the cares of many a day,
Sporting to the lively lay—
Mighty Bacchus! march and lead
(Torch in hand toward the mead)
Thy devoted humble Chorus;
Mighty Bacchus—move before us!

Keep silence — keep peace — and let all the profane
From our holy solemnity duly refrain;
Whose souls, unenlightened by taste, are obscure;
Whose poetical notions are dark and impure;
Whose theatrical conscience
Is sullied by nonsense;
Who never were trained by the mighty Cratinus
In mystical orgies, poetic and vinous;
Who delight in buffooning and jests out of season;
Who promote the designs of oppression and treason;
Who foster sedition and strife and debate;
All traitors, in short, to the Stage and the State:
Who surrender a fort, or in private export
To places and harbors of hostile resort
Clandestine consignments of cables and pitch, —
In the way that Thorycion grew to be rich
From a scoundrelly dirty collector of tribute:
All such we reject and severely prohibit;
All statesmen retrenching the fees and the salaries
Of theatrical bards, in revenge for the railleries
And jests and lampoons of this holy solemnity,
Profanely pursuing their personal enmity,
For having been flouted and scoffed and scorned —
All such are admonished and heartily warned;
We warn them once,
We warn them twice,
We warn and admonish — we warn them thrice,
To conform to the law,
To retire and withdraw;
While the Chorus again with the formal saw,
(Fixt and assign'd to the festive day)
Move to the measure and march away.

SEMI-CHORUS

March! march! lead forth,
Lead forth manfully,
March in order all;
Bustling, hustling, justling,
As it may befall;
Flocking, shouting, laughing,
Mocking, flouting, quaffing,
One and all;
All have had a belly-full
Of breakfast brave and plentiful;

Therefore
Evermore
With your voices and your bodies
Serve the goddess,
And raise
Songs of praise;
She shall save the country still,
And save it against the traitor's will;
So she says.

SEMI-CHORUS

Now let us raise in a different strain
The praise of the goddess, the giver of grain;
Imploring her favor
With other behavior,
In measures more sober, submissive, and graver.

SEMI-CHORUS

Ceres, holy patroness,
Condescend to mark and bless,
With benevolent regard,
Both the Chorus and the Bard;
Grant them for the present day
Many things to sing and say,
Follies intermixed with sense;
Folly, but without offense.
Grant them with the present play
To bear the prize of verse away.

SEMI-CHORUS

Now call again, and with a different measure,
The power of mirth and pleasure;
The florid, active Bacchus, bright and gay,
To journey forth and join us on the way.

SEMI-CHORUS

O Bacchus, attend! the customary patron of every lively lay;
Go forth without delay
Thy wonted annual way,
To meet the ceremonious holy matron:
Her grave procession gracing,
Thine airy footsteps tracing
With unlaborious, light, celestial motion;

And here at thy devotion
Behold thy faithful choir
In pitiful attire:
All overworn and ragged,
This jerkin old and jagged,
These buskins torn and burst,
Though sufferers in the fray,
May serve us at the worst
To sport throughout the day;
And then within the shades
I spy some lovely maids
With whom we romped and reveled,
Dismantled and disheveled,
With their bosoms open,—
With whom we might be coping.
Xan.—Well, I was always hearty,
Disposed to mirth and ease:
I'm ready to join the party.
Bac.— And I will if you please.

A PARODY OF EURIPIDES'S LYRIC VERSE

From ‹The Frogs›

HALCYONS ye by the flowing sea
Waves that warble twitteringly,
Circling over the tumbling blue,
Dipping your down in its briny dew,
Spi-i-iders in corners dim
Spi-spi-spinning your fairy film,
Shuttles echoing round the room
Silver notes of the whistling loom,
Where the light-footed dolphin skips
Down the wake of the dark-prowed ships,
Over the course of the racing steed
Where the clustering tendrils breed
Grapes to drown dull care in delight,
Oh! mother make me a child again just for to-night!
I don't exactly see how that last line is to scan,
But that's a consideration I leave to our musical man.

THE PROLOGUES OF EURIPIDES

From ‹The Frogs›

[The point of the following selection lies in the monotony of both narrative style and metre in Euripides's prologues, and especially his regular cæsura after the fifth syllable of a line. The burlesque tag used by Aristophanes to demonstrate this effect could not be applied in the same way to any of the fourteen extant plays of Sophocles and Æschylus.]

Æschylus—And by Jove, I'll not stop to cut up your verses word by word, but if the gods are propitious I'll spoil all your prologues with a little flask of smelling-salts.

Euripides—With a flask of smelling-salts?

Æsch.—With a single one. For you build your verses so that anything will fit into the metre,—a leathern sack, or eider-down, or smelling-salts. I'll show you.

Eur.—So, you'll show me, will you?

Æsch.—I will that.

Dionysus—Pronounce.

Eur. [*declaiming*]—

Ægyptus, as broad-bruited fame reports,
With fifty children voyaging the main
To Argos came, and

Æsch.— —lost his smelling-salts.

Dion.—What the mischief have the smelling-salts got to do with it? Recite another prologue to him and let me see.

Eur.—

Dionysus, thyrsus-armed and faun-skin-clad,
Amid the torchlights on Parnassus's slope
Dancing and prancing

Æsch.— —lost his smelling-salts.

Dion.—Caught out again by the smelling-salts.

Eur.—No matter. Here's a prologue that he can't fit 'em to.

No lot of mortal man is wholly blest:
The high-born youth hath lacked the means of life,
The lowly lout hath

Æsch.— —lost his smelling-salts.

Dion.— Euripides —
Eur.— Well, what?
Dion.— Best take in sail.
These smelling-salts, methinks, will blow a gale.
Eur.— What do I care? I'll fix him next time.
Dion.— Well, recite another, and steer clear of the smelling-salts.
Eur.—

Cadmus departing from the town of Tyre,
Son of Agenor

Æsch.— — lost his smelling-salts.
Dion.— My dear fellow, buy those smelling-salts, or there won't be a rag left of all your prologues.
Eur.— What? I buy 'em of him?
Dion.— If you'll be advised by me.
Eur.— Not a bit of it. I've lots of prologues where he can't work 'em in.

Pelops the Tantalid to Pisa coming
With speedy coursers

Æsch.— — lost his smelling-salts.
Dion.— There they are again, you see. Do let him have 'em, my good Æschylus. You can replace 'em for a nickel.
Eur.— Never. I've not run out yet.

Œneus from broad fields

Æsch.— — lost his smelling-salts.
Eur.— Let me say the whole verse, won't you?

Œneus from broad fields reaped a mighty crop
And offering first-fruits

Æsch.— — lost his smelling-salts.
Dion.— While sacrificing? Who filched them?
Eur.— Oh, never mind him. Let him try it on this verse:—

Zeus, as the word of sooth declared of old —

Dion.— It's no use, he'll say Zeus lost his smelling-salts. For those smelling-salts fit your prologues like a kid glove. But go on and turn your attention to his lyrics.

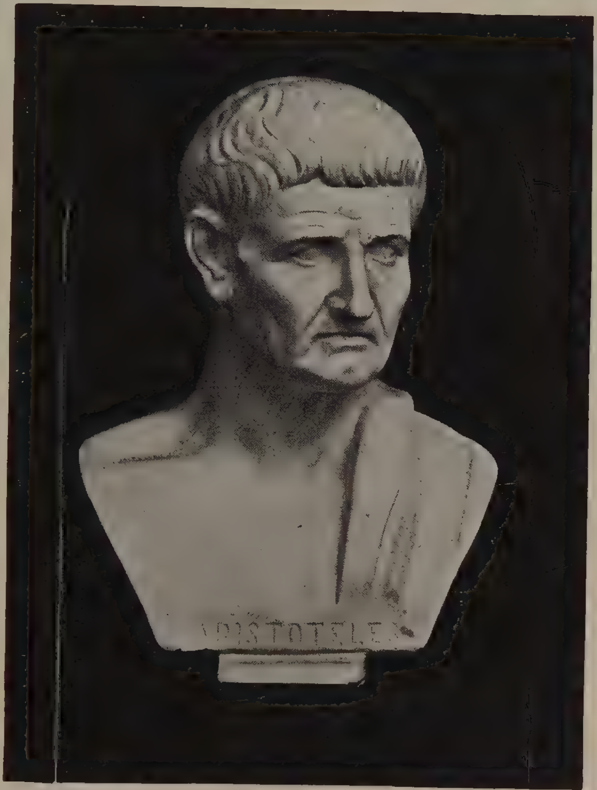
ARISTOTLE

(B. C. 384–322)

BY THOMAS DAVIDSON

The «Stagirite,» called by Eusebius «Nature's private secretary,» and by Dante «the master of those that know,»—the greatest thinker of the ancient world, and the most influential of all time,—was born of Greek parents at Stagira, in the mountains of Macedonia, in B. C. 384. Of his mother, Phæstis, almost nothing is known. His father, Nicomachus, belonged to a medical family, and acted as private physician to Amyntas, grandfather of Alexander the Great; whence it is probable that Aristotle's boyhood was passed at or near the Macedonian court. Losing both his parents while a mere boy, he was taken charge of by a relative, Proxenus Atarneus, and sent, at the age of seventeen, to Athens to study. Here he entered the school of Plato, where he remained twenty years, as pupil and as teacher. During this time he made the acquaintance of the leading contemporary thinkers, read omnivorously, amassed an amount of knowledge that seems almost fabulous, schooled himself in systematic thought, and (being well off) collected a library, perhaps the first considerable private library in the world. Having toward the end felt obliged to assume an independent attitude in thought, he was not at the death of Plato (347) appointed his successor in the Academy, as might have been expected. Not wishing at that time to set up a rival school, he retired to the court of a former fellow-pupil, Hermias, then king of Assos and Atarneus, whom he greatly respected, and whose adopted daughter, Pythias, he later married. Here he remained, pursuing his studies, for three years; and left only when his patron was treacherously murdered by the Persians.

Having retired to Mitylene, he soon afterward received an invitation from Philip of Macedonia to undertake the education of his son Alexander, then thirteen years old. Aristotle willingly obeyed this summons; and retiring with his royal pupil to Mieza, a town southwest of Pella, imparted his instruction in the Nymphæum, which he had arranged in imitation of Plato's garden school. Alexander remained with him three years, and was then called by his father to assume important State duties. Whether Aristotle's instruction continued after that is uncertain; but the two men remained fast friends, and there can be no doubt that much of the nobility, self-control, largeness of purpose, and enthusiasm for culture, which



ARISTOTLE.

characterized Alexander's subsequent career, were due to the teaching of the philosopher. What Aristotle was in the world of thought, Alexander became in the world of action.

Aristotle remained in Macedonia ten years, giving instruction to young Macedonians and continuing his own studies. He then returned to Athens, and opened a school in the *peripatos*, or promenade, of the Lyceum, the gymnasium of the foreign residents, a school which from its location was called the Peripatetic. Here he developed a manifold activity. He pursued all kinds of studies, logical, rhetorical, physical, metaphysical, ethical, political, and æsthetic, gave public (exoteric) and private (esoteric) instruction, and composed the bulk of the treatises which have made his name famous. These treatises were composed slowly, in connection with his lectures, and subjected to frequent revision. He likewise endeavored to lead an ideal social life with his friends and pupils, whom he gathered under a common roof to share meals and elevated converse in common.

Thus affairs went on for twelve fruitful years, and might have gone on longer, but for the sudden death of Alexander, his friend and patron. Then the hatred of the Athenians to the conqueror showed itself in hostility to his old master, and sought for means to put him out of the way. How hard it was to find a pretext for so doing is shown by the fact that they had to fix upon the poem which he had written on the death of his friend Hermias many years before, and base upon it — as having the form of the pæan, sacred to Apollo — a charge of impiety. Aristotle, recognizing the utter flimsiness of the charge, and being unwilling, as he said, to allow the Athenians to sin a second time against philosophy, retired beyond their reach to his villa at Chalcis in Eubœa, where he died of stomach disease the year after (322). In the later years of his life, the friendship between him and his illustrious pupil had, owing to certain outward circumstances, become somewhat cooled; but there never was any serious breach. His body was carried to Stagira, which he had induced Philip to restore after it had been destroyed, and whose inhabitants therefore looked upon him as the founder of the city. As such he received the religious honors accorded to heroes: an altar was erected to him, at which an annual festival was celebrated in the month named after him.

We may sum up the character of Aristotle by saying that he was one of the sanest and most rounded men that ever lived. As a philosopher, he stands in the front rank. «No time,» says Hegel, «has a man to place by his side.» Nor was his moral character inferior to his intellect. No one can read his 'Ethics,' or his will (the text of which is extant), without feeling the nobleness, simplicity, purity, and modernness of his nature. In his family relations, especially, he seems to have stood far above his contemporaries. The depth of his æsthetic perception is attested by his poems and his ‘Poetics.’

The unsatisfactory and fragmentary condition in which Aristotle's works have come down to us makes it difficult to judge of his style. Many of them seem mere collections of notes and jottings for lectures, without any attempt at style. The rest are distinguished by brevity, terseness, and scientific precision. No other man ever enriched philosophic language with so many original expressions. We know, from the testimony of most competent judges, such as Cicero, that his popular writings, dialogues, etc., were written in an elegant style, casting even that of Plato into the shade; and this is borne fully out by some extant fragments.

Greek philosophy culminates in Aristotle. Setting out with a naïve acceptance of the world as being what it seemed, and trying to reduce this Being to some material principle, such as water, air, etc., it was gradually driven, by force of logic, to distinguish Being from Seeming, and to see that while the latter was dependent on the thinking subject, the former could not be anything material. This result was reached by both the materialistic and spiritualistic schools, and was only carried one step further by the Sophists, who maintained that even the being of things depended on the thinker. This necessarily led to skepticism, individualism, and disruption of the old social and religious order.

Then arose Socrates, greatest of the Sophists, who, seeing that the outer world had been shown to depend on the inner, adopted as his motto, «Know Thyself,» and devoted himself to the study of mind. By his dialectic method he showed that skepticism and individualism, so far as anarchic, can be overcome by carrying out thought to its implications; when it proves to be the same for all, and to bring with it an authority binding on all, and replacing that of the old external gods. Thus Socrates discovered the principle of human liberty, a principle necessarily hostile to the ancient State, which absorbed the man in the citizen. Socrates was accordingly put to death as an atheist; and then Plato, with good intentions but prejudiced insight, set to work to restore the old tyranny of the State. This he did by placing truth, or reality (which Socrates had found in complete thought, internal to the mind), outside of both thought and nature, and making it consist of a group of eternal schemes, or forms, of which natural things are merely transient phantoms, and which can be reached by only a few aristocratic souls, born to rule the rest. On the basis of this distortion he constructed his Republic, in which complete despotism is exercised by the philosophers through the military; man is reduced to a machine, his affections and will being disregarded; community of women and of property is the law; and science is scouted.

Aristotle's philosophy may be said to be a protest against this view, and an attempt to show that reality is embodied in nature, which depends on a supreme intelligence, and may be realized in other intelligences, or thought-centres, such as the human mind. In other words, according to Aristotle, truth is actual in the world and potential in all minds, which may by experience put on its forms. Thus the individualism of the Sophists and the despotism of Plato are overcome, while an important place is made for experience, or science.

Aristotle, accepting the world of common-sense, tried to rationalize it; that is, to realize it in himself. First among the Greeks he believed it to be unique, uncreated, and eternal, and gave his reasons. Recognizing that the phenomenal world exists in change, he investigated the principle and method of this. Change he conceives as a transition from potentiality to actuality, and as always due to something actualized, communicating its form to something potential. Looking at the «world» as a whole, and picturing it as limited, globular, and constructed like an onion, with the earth in the centre, and round about it nine concentric spheres carrying the planets and stars, he concludes that there must be at one end something purely actual and therefore unchanging,—that is, pure form or energy; and at the other, something purely potential and therefore changing,—that is, pure matter or latency. The pure actuality is at the circumference, pure matter at the centre. Matter, however, never exists without some form. Thus, nature is an eternal circular process between the actual and the potential. The supreme Intelligence, God, being pure energy, changelessly thinks himself, and through the love inspired by his perfection moves the outmost sphere; which would move all the rest were it not for inferior intelligences, fifty-six in number, who, by giving them different directions, diversify the divine action and produce the variety of the world. The celestial world is composed of eternal matter, or æther, whose only change is circular motion; the sublunary world is composed of changing matter, in four different but mutually transmutable forms—fire, air, water, earth—movable in two opposite directions, in straight lines, under the ever-varying influence of the celestial spheres.

Thus the world is an organism, making no progress as a whole, but continually changing in its various parts. In it all real things are individuals, not universals, as Plato thought. And forms pass from individual to individual only. Peleus, not humanity, is the parent of Achilles; the learned man only can teach the ignorant. In the world-process there are several distinct stages, to each of which Aristotle devotes a special work, or series of works. Beginning with the «four elements» and their changes, he works up through the mineral, vegetable, and animal worlds, to man, and thence through the spheral intelligences to the supreme, divine intelligence, on which the Whole depends. Man stands on the dividing line between the temporal and the eternal; belonging with his animal part to the former, with his intelligence (which «enters from without») to the latter. He is an intelligence, of the same nature as the sphere-movers, but individuated by mutable matter in the form of a body, matter being in all cases the principle of individuation. As intelligence, he becomes free; takes the guidance of his life into his own hand; and, first through ethics, politics, and æsthetics, the forms of his sensible or practical activity, and second through logic, science, and philosophy, the forms of his intellectual activity, he rises to divine heights and «plays the immortal.» His supreme activity is contemplation. This, the eternal energy of God, is possible for man only at rare intervals.

Aristotle, by placing his eternal forms in sensible things as their meaning, made science possible and necessary. Not only is he the father of scientific method, inductive and deductive, but his actual contributions to science place him in the front rank of scientists. His Zoölogy, Psychology, Logic, Metaphysics, Ethics, Politics, and Æsthetics, are still highly esteemed and extensively studied. At the same time, by failing to overcome the dualism and supernaturalism of Plato, by adopting the popular notions about spheres and sphere-movers, by separating intelligence from sense, by conceiving matter as independent and the principle of individuation, and by making science relate only to the universal, he paved the way for astrology, alchemy, magic, and all the forms of superstition, retarding the advance of several sciences, as for example astronomy and chemistry, for many hundred years.

After Aristotle's death, his school was continued by a succession of studious and learned men, but did not for many centuries deeply affect contemporary life. At last, in the fifth century A. D., his thought found its way into the Christian schools, giving birth to rationalism and historical criticism. At various times its adherents were condemned as heretics and banished, mostly to Syria. Here, at Edessa and Nisibis, they established schools of learning which for several centuries were the most famous in the world. The entire works of Aristotle were turned into Syriac; among them several spurious ones of Neo-Platonic origin, notably the famous ‹Liber de Causis› and the ‹Theology of Aristotle.› Thus a Neo-Platonic Aristotle came to rule Eastern learning. On the rise of Islâm, this Aristotle was borrowed by the Muslims, and became ruler of their schools at Bagdad, Basra, and other places,—schools which produced many remarkable men. On the decay of these, he passed in the twelfth century into the schools of Spain, and here ruled supreme until Arab philosophy was suppressed, shortly before 1200. From the Arabs he passed into the Christian Church about this date; and though at first resisted, was finally accepted, and became «the philosopher» of the schools, and the inspirer of Dante. The Reformers, though decrying him, were forced to have recourse to him; but his credit was not re-established until the present century, when, thanks to Hegel, Trendelenburg, Brandis, and the Berlin Academy, his true value was recognized and his permanent influence insured.

The extant works of Aristotle, covering the whole field of science, may be classified as follows:—

A. *Logical or Formal*, dealing with the form rather than the matter of science:—'Categories,' treating of Being and its determination, which, being regarded ontologically, bring the work into the metaphysical sphere; 'On Interpretation,' dealing with the proposition; 'Former Analytics,' theory of the syllogism; 'Later Analytics,' theory of proof; 'Topics,' probable proofs; 'Sophistical proofs,' fallacies. These works were later united by the Stoics under the title 'Organon,' or Instrument (of science).

B. *Scientific or Philosophical*, dealing with the matter of science. These may be subdivided into three classes: (*a*) Theoretical, (*b*) Practical, (*c*) Creative.

(*a*) The *Theoretical* has further subdivisions: (*a*) Metaphysical, (*b*) Physical, (*c*) Mathematical.—(*a*) The Metaphysical works include the incomplete collection under the name 'Metaphysics.'—(*b*) The Physical works include 'Physics,' 'On the Heavens,' 'On Generation and Decay,' 'On the Soul,' with eight supplementary tracts on actions of the soul as combined with the body; viz., 'On Sense and Sensibles,' 'On Memory and Reminiscence,' 'On Sleep and Waking,' 'On Dreams,' 'On Divination from Dreams,' 'On Length and Shortness of Life,' 'On Life and Death,' 'On Respiration,' 'Meteorologics,' 'Histories of Animals' (Zoögraphy), 'On the Parts of Animals,' 'On the Generation of Animals,' 'On the Motion of Animals,' 'Problems' (largely spurious), 'On the Cosmos,' 'Physiognomics,' 'On Wonderful Auditions,' 'On Colors.'—The Mathematical works include 'On Indivisible Lines,' 'Mechanics.'

(*b*) The *Practical* works are 'Nicomachean Ethics,' 'Endemean Ethics,' 'Great Ethics' ('Magna Moralia'), really different forms of the same work; 'Politics,' 'Constitutions' (originally one hundred and fifty-eight in number; now represented only by the recently discovered ‘Constitution of Athens’), ‘On Virtues and Vices,’ ‘Rhetoric to Alexander,’ ‘Œconomics.’

(*c*) Of *Creative* works we have only the fragmentary ‘Poetics.’ To these may be added a few poems, one of which is given here.

Besides the extant works of Aristotle, we have titles, fragments, and some knowledge of the contents of a large number more. Among these are the whole of the «exoteric» works, including nineteen Dialogues. A list of his works, as arranged in the Alexandrian Library (apparently), is given by Diogenes Laërtius in his ‘Life of Aristotle’ (printed in the Berlin and Paris editions of ‘Aristotle’); a list in which it is not easy to identify the whole of the extant works. The ‘Fragments’ appear in both the editions just named. Some of the works named above are almost certainly spurious; *e. g.*, the ‘Rhetoric to Alexander,’ the ‘Œconomics,’ etc.

The chief editions of Aristotle's works, exclusive of the ‘Constitution of Athens,’ are that of the Berlin Academy (Im. Bekker), containing text, scholia, Latin translation, and Index in Greek (5 vols., square 4to); and the Paris or Didot (Dübner, Bussemaker, Heitz), containing text, Latin translation, and very complete Index in Latin (5 vols., 4to). Of the chief works the best editions are:—‘Organon,’ Waitz; ‘Metaphysics,’ Schwegler, Bonitz; ‘Physics,’ Prantl; ‘Meteorologics,’ Ideler; ‘On the Generation of Animals,’ Aubert and Wimmer; ‘Psychology,’ Trendelenburg, Torstrik, Wallace (with English translation); ‘Nicomachean Ethics,’ Grant, Ramsauer, Susemihl; ‘Politics,’ Stahr, Susemihl; ‘Constitution of Athens,’ Kenyon, Sandys; ‘Poetics,’ Susemihl, Vahlen, Butcher (with English translation). There are few good English translations of Aristotle's works; but among these may be mentioned Peter's ‘Nicomachean Ethics,’ Jowett's and Welldon's ‘Politics,’ and Poste's ‘Constitution of Athens.’ There is a fair French translation of the principal works by Barthélemy St.-Hilaire. The Berlin Academy is now (1896) publishing the ancient Greek commentaries on Aristotle in thirty-five quarto volumes. The best work on Aristotle is that by E. Zeller, in Vol. iii. of his ‘Philosophie der Griechen.’ The English works by Lewes and Grote are inferior. For Bibliography, the student may consult Ueberweg, ‘Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie,’ Vol. i., pages 196 *seq.*

Thomas Davidson

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

From ‹On the Soul,› Book iii., Chapter 6

CONCERNING that part of the soul, however, by which the soul knows (and is prudentially wise) whether it is separable or not separable, according to magnitude, but according to reason, it must be considered what difference it possesses, and how intellectual perception is produced. If, therefore, to perceive intellectually is the same thing as to perceive sensibly, it will either be to suffer something from the intelligible, or something else of this kind. It is necessary, however, that it should be impassive, but capable of receiving form; and in capacity a thing of this kind, but not this; and also, that as the sensitive power is to sensibles, so should intellect be to intelligibles. It is necessary, therefore, since it understands all things, that it should be unmingled, as Anaxagoras says, that it may predominate: but this is that it may know; for that which is foreign at the same time presenting itself to the view, impedes and obstructs.

Hence, neither is there any other nature of it than this, that it is possible. That, therefore, which is called the intellect of soul (I mean the intellect by which the soul energizes dianoetically and hypoleptically), is nothing in energy of beings before it intellectually perceives them. Hence, neither is it reasonable that it should be mingled with body; for thus it would become a thing with certain quality, would be hot or cold, and would have a certain organ in the same manner as the sensitive power. Now, however, there is no organ of it. In a proper manner, therefore, do they speak, who say that the soul is the place of forms; except that this is not true of the whole soul, but of that which is intellective; nor is it forms in entelecheia, but in capacity. But that the impassivity of the sensitive and intellective power is not similar, is evident in the sensoria and in sense. For sense cannot perceive from a vehement sensible object (as for instance, sounds from very loud sounds; nor from strong odors and colors can it either see or smell): but intellect, when it understands anything very intelligible, does not less understand inferior concerns, but even understands them in a greater degree; for the sensitive power is not without body, but intellect is separate from body].

When however it becomes particulars, in such a manner as he is said to possess scientific knowledge who scientifically knows in energy (and this happens when it is able to energize through itself), then also it is similarly in a certain respect in capacity, yet not after the same manner as before it learnt or discovered; and it is then itself able to understand itself. By the sensitive power, therefore, it distinguishes the hot and the cold, and those things of which flesh is a certain reason; but by another power, either separate, or as an inflected line subsists with reference to itself when it is extended, it distinguishes the essence of flesh. Further still, in those things which consist in ablation, the straight is as the flat nose; for it subsists with the continued.

Some one, however, may question, if intellect is simple and impassive and has nothing in common with anything, as Anaxagoras says, how it can perceive intellectually, if to perceive intellectually is to suffer something; for so far as something is common to both, the one appears to act, but the other to suffer. Again, it may also be doubted whether intellect is itself intelligible. For either intellect will also be present with other things, if it is not intelligible according to another thing, but the intelligible is one certain thing in species; or it will have something mingled, which will make it to be intelligible in the same manner as other things. Or shall we say that to suffer subsists according to something common? On which account, it was before observed that intellect is in capacity, in a certain respect, intelligibles, but is no one of them in entelecheia, before it understands or perceives intellectually. But it is necessary to conceive of it as of a table in which nothing is written in entelecheia; which happens to be the case in intellect. But in those things which have matter, each of the intelligibles is in capacity only. Hence, intellect will not be present with them; for the intellect of such things is capacity without matter. But with intellect the intelligible will be present.

. . . .

Since, however, in every nature there is something which is matter to each genus (and this because it is all those in capacity), and something which is the cause and affective, because it produces all things (in such a manner as art is affected with respect to matter), it is necessary that these differences should also be inherent in the soul. And the one is an intellect of this kind because it becomes all things; but the other because it produces all things as a certain habit, such for instance as light. For in a certain respect, light also causes colors which are in capacity to be colors in energy. And this intellect is separate, unmingled, and impassive, since it is in its essence energy; for the efficient is always more honorable than the patient, and the principle than matter. Science, also, in energy is the same as the thing [which is scientifically known]. But science which is in capacity is prior in time in the one [to science in energy]; though, in short, neither [is capacity prior to energy] in time. It does not, however, perceive intellectually at one time and at another time not, but separate intellect is alone this very thing which it is; and this alone is immortal and eternal. We do not, however, remember because this is impassive; but the passive intellect is corruptible, and without this the separate intellect understands nothing.

ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HISTORY AND POETRY, AND HOW HISTORICAL MATTER SHOULD BE USED IN POETRY

From the ‹Poetics,› Chapter 9

But it is evident from what has been said that it is not the province of a poet to relate things which have happened, but such as might have happened, and such things as are possible according to probability, or which would necessarily have happened. For a historian and a poet do not differ from each other because the one writes in verse and the other in prose; for the history of Herodotus might be written in verse, and yet it would be no less a history with metre than without metre. But they differ in this, that the one speaks of things which have happened, and the other of such as might have happened. Hence, poetry is more philosophic, and more deserving of attention, than history. For poetry speaks more of universals, but history of particulars. But universal consists, indeed, in relating or performing certain things which happen to a man of a certain description, either probably or necessarily [to which the aim of poetry is directed in giving names]; but particular consists in narrating what [for example] Alcibiades did, or what he suffered. In comedy, therefore, this is now become evident. For comic poets having composed a fable through things of a probable nature, they thus give whatever names they please to their characters, and do not, like iambic poets, write poems about particular persons. But in tragedy they cling to real names. The cause, however, of this is, that the possible is credible. Things therefore which have not yet been done, we do not yet believe to be possible: but it is evident that things which have been done are possible, for they would not have been done if they were impossible.

Not indeed but that in some tragedies there are one or two known names, and the rest are feigned; but in others there is no known name, as for instance in 'The Flower of Agatho.' For in this tragedy the things and the names are alike feigned, and yet it delights no less. Hence, one must not seek to adhere entirely to traditional fables, which are the subjects of tragedy. For it is ridiculous to make this the object of search, because even known subjects are known but to a few, though at the same time they delight all men. From these things, therefore, it is evident that a poet ought rather to be the author of fables than of metres, inasmuch as he is a poet from imitation, and he imitates actions. Hence, though it should happen that he relates things which have happened, he is no less a poet. For nothing hinders but that some actions which have happened are such as might both probably and possibly have happened, and by [the narration of] such he is a poet.

But of simple plots and actions, the episodic are the worst. But I call the plot episodic, in which it is neither probable nor necessary that the episodes follow each other. Such plots, however, are composed by bad poets, indeed, through their own want of ability; but by good poets, on account of the players. For, introducing [dramatic] contests, and extending the plot beyond its capabilities, they are frequently compelled to distort the connection of the parts. But tragedy is not only an imitation of a perfect action, but also of actions which are terrible and piteous, and actions principally become such (and in a greater degree when they happen contrary to opinion) on account of each other. For thus they will possess more of the marvelous than if they happened from chance and fortune; since also of things which are from fortune, those appear to be most admirable which seem to happen as it were by design. Thus the statue of Mityus at Argos killed him who was the cause of the death of Mityus by falling as he was surveying it. For such events as these seem not to take place casually. Hence it is necessary that fables of this kind should be more beautiful.

ON PHILOSOPHY

Quoted in Cicero's ‹Nature of the Gods›

If there were men whose habitations had been always under ground, in great and commodious houses, adorned with statues and pictures, furnished with everything which they who are reputed happy abound with: and if, without stirring from thence, they should be informed of a certain divine power and majesty, and after some time the earth should open and they should quit their dark abode to come to us, where they should immediately behold the earth, the seas, the heavens; should consider the vast extent of the clouds and force of the winds; should see the sun and observe his grandeur and beauty, and perceive that day is occasioned by the diffusion of his light through the sky; and when night has obscured the earth they should contemplate the heavens, bespangled and adorned with stars, the surprising variety of the moon in her increase and wane, the rising and setting of all the stars and the inviolable regularity of their courses, — when, says he, «they should see these things, they would undoubtedly conclude that there are gods, and that these are their mighty works.»

ON ESSENCES

From ‹The Metaphysics,› Book xi., Chapter I

The subject of theory (or speculative science) is *essence.* In it are investigated the principles and causes of essences. The truth is, if the All be regarded as a whole, essence is its first (or highest) part. Also, if we consider the natural order of the categories, essence stands at the head of the list; then comes quality; then quantity. It is true that the other categories, such as qualities and movements, are not in any absolute sense at all, and the same is true of [negatives, such as] not-white or not-straight. Nevertheless, we use such expressions as «Not-white is.»

Moreover, no one of the other categories is separable [or independent]. This is attested by the procedure of the older philosophers; for it was the principles, elements, and causes of essence that were the objects of their investigations. The thinkers of the present day, to be sure, are rather inclined to consider universals as essence. For genera are universals, and these they hold to be principles and essences, mainly because their mode of investigation is a logical one. The older philosophers, on the other hand, considered particular things to be essences; *e. g.*, fire and earth, not body in general.

There are three essences. Two of these are sensible, one being eternal and the other transient. The latter is obvious to all, in the form of plants and animals; with regard to the former, there is room for discussion, as to whether its elements are one or many. The third, differing from the other two, is immutable and is maintained by certain persons to be separable. Some make two divisions of it, whereas others class together, as of one nature, ideas and mathematical entities; and others again admit only the latter. The first two essences belong to physical science, for they are subject to change; the last belongs to another science, if there is no principle common to all.

ON COMMUNITY OF STUDIES

From ‹The Politics,› Book 8

No one, therefore, can doubt that the legislator ought principally to attend to the education of youth. For in cities where this is neglected, the politics are injured. For every State ought to be governed according to its nature; since the appropriate manners of each polity usually preserve the polity, and establish it from the beginning. Thus, appropriate democratic manners preserve and establish a democracy, and oligarchic an oligarchy. Always, however, the best manners are the cause of the best polity. Further still, in all professions and arts, there are some things which ought previously to be learnt, and to which it is requisite to be previously accustomed, in order to the performance of their several works; so that it is evident that it is also necessary in the practice of virtue.

Since, however, there is one purpose to every city, it is evident that the education must necessarily be one and the same in all cities; and that the attention paid to this should be common. At the same time, also, no one ought to think that any person takes care of the education of his children separately, and privately teaches them that particular discipline which appears to him to be proper. But it is necessary that the studies of the public should be common. At the same time, also, no one ought to think that any citizen belongs to him in particular, but that all the citizens belong to the city; for each individual is a part of the city. The care and attention, however, which are paid to each of the parts, naturally look to the care and attention of the whole. And for this, some one may praise the Lacedæmonians; for they pay very great attention to their children, and this in common. It is evident, therefore, that laws should be established concerning education, and that it should be made common.

HYMN TO VIRTUE

VIRTUE, to men thou bringest care and toil;
Yet art thou life's best, fairest spoil!
O virgin goddess, for thy beauty's sake
To die is delicate in this our Greece,
Or to endure of pain the stern strong ache.
Such fruit for our soul's ease
Of joys undying, dearer far than gold
Or home or soft-eyed sleep, dost thou unfold!
It was for thee the seed of Zeus,
Stout Herakles, and Leda's twins, did choose
Strength-draining deeds, to spread abroad thy name:
Smit with the love of thee
Aias and Achilleus went smilingly
Down to Death's portal, crowned with deathless fame.
Now, since thou art so fair,
Leaving the lightsome air,
Atarneus' hero hath died gloriously.
Wherefore immortal praise shall be his guerdon:
His goodness and his deeds are made the burden
Of songs divine
Sung by Memory's daughters nine,
Hymning of hospitable Zeus the might
And friendship firm as fate in fate's despite.

Translation of J. A. Symonds.

JÓN ARNASON

(1819–1888)

Jón Arnason was born in 1819, at Hof, Akàgaströnd, in Iceland, where his father, Arm Illugason, was clergyman. After completing the course at the Bessastad Latin School, at that time the most famous school in Iceland, he took his first position as librarian of the so-called Stiptbókasafn Islands (since 1881 called the National Library), which office he held till 1887, when he asked to be relieved from his official duties. During this period he had been also the first librarian of the Reykjavik branch of the Icelandic Literary Society; a teacher and the custodian of the library at the Latin School, which in the mean time had been moved from Bessastad to Reykjavik; secretary of the bishop, Helgi Thordersen, and custodian of the growing collection of Icelandic antiquities which has formed the nucleus of a national museum. He had found time, besides, during these years, for considerable literary work; and apart from several valuable bibliographies had, alone and in collaboration, made important contributions to his native literature. He died at Reykjavik in 1888.

His principal literary work, and that by which alone he is known outside of Iceland, is the collection of folk-tales that appeared in Iceland in 1862–64, in two volumes, with the title 'Islenzkar Thoosögur og Æfintyri' (Icelandic Popular Legends and Tales). A small preliminary collection, called 'Islenzk Æfintyri' (Icelandic Tales), made in collaboration with Magnus Grimsson, had been published in 1852. Subsequently, Jón Arnason went to work single-handed to make an exhaustive collection of the folk-tales of the country, which by traveling and correspondence he drew from every nook and corner of Iceland. No effort was spared to make the collection complete, and many years were spent in this undertaking. The results were in every way valuable. No more important collection of folk-tales exists in the literature of any nation, and the work has become both a classic at home and a most suggestive link in the comparative study of folklore elsewhere. Arnason thus performed for his native land what the Grimms did for Germany, and what Asbjörnsen and Moe did for Norway. He has frequently been called the «Grimm of Iceland.» The stories of the collection have since found their way all over the world, many of them having been translated into English, German, French, and Danish.

In his transcription of the tales, Arnason has followed, even more conscientiously, the plan of the Grimms in adhering to the local or individual form in which the story had come to him in writing or by oral transmission. We get in this way a perfect picture of the national spirit, and a better knowledge of life and environment in Iceland than from any other source. In these stories there is much to say of elves and trolls, of ghosts and «fetches,» of outlaws and the devil. Magic plays an important part, and there is the usual lore of beasts and plants. Many of them are but variants of folk-tales that belong to the race. Others, however, are as plainly local evolutions, which in their whole conception are as weird and mysterious as the environment that has produced them.

All the stories are from ‹Icelandic Legends›: Translation of Powell and Magnusson

THE MERMAN

Long ago a farmer lived at Vogar, who was a mighty fisherman; and of all the farms about, not one was so well situated with regard to the fisheries as his.

One day, according to custom, he had gone out fishing; and having cast down his line from the boat and waited awhile, found it very hard to pull up again, as if there were something very heavy at the end of it. Imagine his astonishment when he found that what he had caught was a great fish, with a man's head and body! When he saw that this creature was alive, he addressed it and said, «Who and whence are you?»

«A merman from the bottom of the sea,» was the reply.

The farmer then asked him what he had been doing when the hook caught his flesh.

The other replied, «I was turning the cowl of my mother's chimney-pot, to suit it to the wind. So let me go again, will you?»

«Not for the present,» said the fisherman. «You shall serve me awhile first.» So without more words he dragged him into the boat and rowed to shore with him.

When they got to the boat-house, the fisherman's dog came to him and greeted him joyfully, barking and fawning on him, and wagging his tail. But his master's temper being none of the best, he struck the poor animal; whereupon the merman laughed for the first time.

Having fastened the boat, he went toward his house, dragging his prize with him over the fields, and stumbling over a hillock which lay in his way, cursed it heartily; whereupon the merman laughed for the second time.

When the fisherman arrived at the farm, his wife came out to receive him, and embraced him affectionately, and he received her salutations with pleasure; whereupon the merman laughed for the third time.

Then said the farmer to the merman, «You have laughed three times, and I am curious to know why you have laughed. Tell me, therefore.»

«Never will I tell you,» replied the merman, «unless you promise to take me to the same place in the sea wherefrom you caught me, and there to let me go free again.» So the farmer made him the promise.

«Well,» said the merman, «I laughed the first time because you struck your dog, whose joy at meeting you was real and sincere. The second time, because you cursed the mound over which you stumbled, which is full of golden ducats. And the third time, because you received with pleasure your wife's empty and flattering embrace, who is faithless to you, and a hypocrite. And now be an honest man, and take me out to the sea whence you brought me.»

The farmer replied, «Two things that you have told me I have no means of proving; namely, the faithfulness of my dog and the faithlessness of my wife. But the third I will try the truth of; and if the hillock contain gold, then I will believe the rest.»

Accordingly he went to the hillock, and having dug it up, found therein a great treasure of golden ducats, as the merman had told him. After this the farmer took the merman down to the boat, and to that place in the sea whence he had brought him. Before he put him in, the latter said to him:—

«Farmer, you have been an honest man, and I will reward you for restoring me to my mother, if only you have skill enough to take possession of property that I shall throw in your way. Be happy and prosper.»

Then the farmer put the merman into the sea, and he sank out of sight.

It happened that not long after seven sea-gray cows were seen on the beach, close to the farmer's land. These cows appeared to be very unruly, and ran away directly the farmer approached them. So he took a stick and ran after them, possessed with the fancy that if he could burst the bladder which he saw on the nose of each of them, they would belong to him. He contrived to hit the bladder on the nose of one cow, which then became so tame that he could easily catch it, while the others leaped into the sea and disappeared.

The farmer was convinced that this was the gift of the merman. And a very useful gift it was, for better cow was never seen nor milked in all the land, and she was the mother of the race of gray cows so much esteemed now.

And the farmer prospered exceedingly, but never caught any more mermen. As for his wife, nothing further is told about her, so we can repeat nothing.

THE FISHERMAN OF GÖTUR

It is told that long ago a peasant living at Götur in Myrdalur went out fishing round the island of Dyrhólar. In returning from the sea, he had to cross a morass. It happened once that on his way home after nightfall, he came to a place where a man had lost his horse in the bog, and was unable to recover it without help. The fisherman, to whom this man was a stranger, aided him in freeing his horse from the peat.

When the animal stood again safe and sound upon the dry earth, the stranger said to the fisherman, "I am your neighbor, for I live in Hvammsgil, and am returning from the sea, like you. But I am so poor that I cannot pay you for this service as you ought to be paid. I will promise you, however, this much: that you shall never go to sea without catching fish, nor ever, if you will take my advice, return with empty hands. But you must never put to sea without having first seen me pass your house, as if going toward the shore. Obey me in this matter, and I promise you that you shall never launch your boat in vain."

The fisherman thanked him for this advice; and sure enough it was that for three years afterward, never putting to sea till he had first seen his neighbor pass his door, he always launched his boat safely, and always came home full-handed.

But at the end of the three years it fell out that one day in the early morning, the fisherman, looking out from his house, saw the wind and weather favorable, and all other fishers hurrying down to the sea to make the best of so good a time. But though he waited hour after hour in the hope of seeing his neighbor pass, the man of Hvammsgil never came. At last, losing his patience, he started out without having seen him go by. When he came down to the shore, he found that all the boats were launched and far away.

Before night the wind rose and became a storm, and every boat that had that day put to sea was wrecked, and every fisher drowned; the peasant of Götur alone escaping, for he had been unable to go out fishing. The next night he had a strange dream, in which his neighbor from Hvammsgil came to him and said, «Although you did not yesterday follow my advice, I yet so far felt kindly toward you that I hindered you from going out to sea, and saved you thus from drowning; but look no more forth to see me pass, for we have met for the last time.» And never again did the peasant see his neighbor pass his door.

THE MAGIC SCYTHE

A CERTAIN day-laborer once started from his home in the south to earn wages for hay-cutting in the north country. In the mountains he was suddenly overtaken by a thick mist and sleet-storm, and lost his way. Fearing to go on further, he pitched his tent in a convenient spot, and taking out his provisions, began to eat.

While he was engaged upon his meal, a brown dog came into the tent, so ill-favored, dirty, wet, and fierce-eyed, that the poor man felt quite afraid of it, and gave it as much bread and meat as it could devour. This the dog swallowed greedily, and ran off again into the mist. At first the man wondered much to see a dog in such a wild place, where he never expected to meet with a living creature; but after a while he thought no more about the matter, and having finished his supper, fell asleep, with his saddle for a pillow.

At midnight he dreamed that he saw a tall and aged woman enter his tent, who spoke thus to him:—«I am beholden to you, good man, for your kindness to my daughter, but am unable to reward you as you deserve. Here is a scythe which I place beneath your pillow; it is the only gift I can make you, but despise it not. It will surely prove useful to you, as it can cut down all that lies before it. Only beware of putting it into the fire to temper it. Sharpen it, however, as you will, but in that way never." So saying, she was seen no more.

When the man awoke and looked forth, he found the mist all gone and the sun high in heaven; so getting all his things together and striking his tent, he laid them upon the pack-horses, saddling last of all his own horse. But on lifting his saddle from the ground, he found beneath it a small scythe blade, which seemed well worn and was rusty. On seeing this, he at once recalled to mind his dream, and taking the scythe with him, set out once more on his way. He soon found again the road which he had lost, and made all speed to reach the well-peopled district to which he was bound.

When he arrived at the north country, he went from house to house, but did not find any employment, for every farmer had laborers enough, and one week of hay-harvest was already past. He heard it said, however, that one old woman in the district, generally thought by her neighbors to be skilled in magic and very rich, always began her hay-cutting a week later than anybody else, and though she seldom employed a laborer, always contrived to finish it by the end of the season. When by any chance—and it was a rare one—she did engage a workman, she was never known to pay him for his work.

Now the peasant from the south was advised to ask this old woman for employment, having been warned of her strange habits.

He accordingly went to her house, and offered himself to her as a day laborer. She accepted his offer, and told him that he might, if he chose, work a week for her, but must expect no payment.

"Except," she said, "you can cut more grass in the whole week than I can rake in on the last day of it."

To these terms he gladly agreed, and began mowing. And a very good scythe he found that to be which the woman had given him in his dream; for it cut well, and never wanted sharpening, though he worked with it for five days unceasingly. He was well content, too, with his place, for the old woman was kind enough to him.

One day, entering the forge next to her house, he saw a vast number of scythe-handles and rakes, and a big heap of blades, and wondered beyond measure what the old lady could want with all these. It was the fifth day—the Friday—and when he was asleep that night, the same elf-woman whom he had seen upon the mountains came again to him and said:—

«Large as are the meadows you have mown, your employer will easily be able to rake in all that hay to-morrow, and if she does so, will, as you know, drive you away without paying you. When therefore you see yourself worsted, go into the forge, take as many scythe-handles as you think proper, fit their blades to them, and carry them out into that part of the land where the hay is yet uncut. There you must lay them on the ground, and you shall see how things go.»

This said, she disappeared, and in the morning the laborer, getting up, set to work as usual at his mowing.

At six o'clock the old witch came out, bringing five rakes with her, and said to the man, «A goodly piece of ground you have mowed, indeed!»

And so saying, she spread the rakes upon the hay. Then the man saw, to his astonishment, that though the one she held in her hand raked in great quantities of hay, the other four raked in no less each, all of their own accord, and with no hand to wield them.

At noon, seeing that the old woman would soon get the best of him, he went into the forge and took out several scythe-handles, to which he fixed their blades, and bringing them out into the field, laid them down upon the grass which was yet standing. Then all the scythes set to work of their own accord, and cut down the grass so quickly that the rakes could not keep pace with them. And so they went on all the rest of the day, and the old woman was unable to rake in all the hay which lay in the fields. After dark she told him to gather up his scythes and take them into the house again, while she collected her rakes, saying to him:—

«You are wiser than I took you to be, and you know more than myself; so much the better for you, for you may stay as long with me as you like.»

He spent the whole summer in her employment, and they agreed very well together, mowing with mighty little trouble a vast amount of hay. In the autumn she sent him away, well laden with money, to his own home in the south. The next summer, and more than one summer following, he spent in her employ, always being paid as his heart could desire, at the end of the season.

After some years he took a farm of his own in the south country, and was always looked upon by all his neighbors as an honest man, a good fisherman, and an able workman in whatever he might put his hand to. He always cut his own hay, never using any scythe but that which the elf-woman had given him upon the mountains; nor did any of his neighbors ever finish their mowing before him.

One summer it chanced that while he was fishing, one of his neighbors came to his house and asked his wife to lend him her husband's scythe, as he had lost his own. The farmer's wife looked for one, but could only find the one upon which her husband set such store. This, however, a little loth, she lent to the man, begging him at the same time never to temper it in the fire; for that, she said, her good man never did. So the neighbor promised, and taking it with him, bound it to a handle and began to work with it. But, sweep as he would, and strain as he would (and sweep and strain he did right lustily), not a single blade of grass fell. Wroth at this, the man tried to sharpen it, but with no avail. Then he took it into his forge, intending to temper it, for, thought he, what harm could that possibly do? but as soon as the flames touched it, the steel melted like wax, and nothing was left but a little heap of ashes. Seeing this, he went in haste to the farmer's house, where he had borrowed it, and told the woman what had happened; she was at her wits' end with fright and shame when she heard it, for she knew well enough how her husband set store by this scythe, and how angry he would be at its loss.

And angry indeed he was, when he came home, and he beat his wife well for her folly in lending what was not hers to lend. But his wrath was soon over, and he never again, as he never had before, laid the stick about his wife's shoulders.

THE MAN-SERVANT AND THE WATER-ELVES

In a large house, where all the chief rooms were paneled, there lived once upon a time a farmer, whose ill-fate it was that every servant of his that was left alone to guard the house on Christmas Eve, while the rest of the family went to church, was found dead when the family returned home. As soon as the report of this was spread abroad, the farmer had the greatest difficulty in procuring servants who would consent to watch alone in the house on that night; until at last one day a man, a strong fellow, offered him his services, to sit up alone and guard the house. The farmer told him what fate awaited him for his rashness; but the man despised such a fear, and persisted in his determination.

On Christmas Eve, when the farmer and all his family, except the new man-servant, were preparing for church, the farmer said to him, «Come with us to church; I cannot leave you here to die.»

But the other replied, «I intend to stay here, for it would be unwise in you to leave your house unprotected; and besides, the cattle and sheep must have their food at the proper time.»

«Never mind the beasts,» answered the farmer. «Do not be so rash as to remain in the house this night; for whenever we have returned from church on this night, we have always found every living thing in the house dead, with all its bones broken.»

But the man was not to be persuaded, as he considered all these fears beneath his notice; so the farmer and the rest of the servants went away and left him behind, alone in the house.

As soon as he was by himself he began to consider how to guard against anything that might occur; for a dread had stolen over him, in spite of his courage, that something strange was about to take place. At last he thought that the best thing to do was, first of all to light up the family room; and then to find some place in which to hide himself. As soon as he had lighted all the candles, he moved two planks out of the wainscot at the end of the room, and creeping into the space between it and the wall, restored the planks to their places, so that he could see plainly into the room and yet avoid being himself discovered.

He had scarcely finished concealing himself, when two fierce and strange-looking men entered the room and began looking about.

One of them said, «I smell a human being.»

«No,» replied the other, «there is no human being here.»

Then they took a candle and continued their search, until they found the man's dog asleep under one of the beds. They took it up, and having dashed it on the ground till every bone in its body was broken, hurled it from them. When the man-servant saw this, he congratulated himself on not having fallen into their hands.

Suddenly the room was filled with people, who were laden with tables and all kinds of table furniture, silver, cloths, and all, which they spread out, and having done so, sat down to a rich supper, which they had also brought with them. They feasted noisily, and spent the remainder of the night in drinking and dancing. Two of them were appointed to keep guard, in order to give the company due warning of the approach either of anybody or of the day. Three times they went out, always returning with the news that they saw neither the approach of any human being, nor yet of the break of day.

But when the man-servant suspected the night to be pretty far spent, he jumped from his place of concealment into the room, and clashing the two planks together with as much noise as he could make, shouted like a madman, «The day! the day! the day!»

On these words the whole company rose scared from their seats, and rushed headlong out, leaving behind them not only their tables, and all the silver dishes, but even the very clothes they had taken off for ease in dancing. In the hurry of flight many were wounded and trodden under foot, while the rest ran into the darkness, the man-servant after them, clapping the planks together and shrieking, «The day! the day! the day!» until they came to a large lake, into which the whole party plunged headlong and disappeared.

From this the man knew them to be water-elves.

Then he returned home, gathered the corpses of the elves who had been killed in the flight, killed the wounded ones, and, making a great heap of them all, burned them. When he had finished this task, he cleaned up the house and took possession of all the treasures the elves had left behind them.

On the farmer's return, his servant told him all that had occurred, and showed him the spoils. The farmer praised him for a brave fellow, and congratulated him on having escaped with his life. The man gave him half the treasures of the elves, and ever afterward prospered exceedingly.

This was the last visit the water-elves ever paid to *that* house.

THE CROSSWAYS

It is supposed that among the hills there are certain cross-roads, from the centre of which you can see four churches, one at the end of each road.

If you sit at the crossing of these roads on Christmas Eve (or as others say, on New Year's Eve), elves come from every direction and cluster round you, and ask you, with all sorts of blandishments and fair promises, to go with them; but you must continue silent. Then they bring to you rarities and delicacies of every description, gold, silver, and precious stones, meats and wines, of which they beg you to accept; but you must neither move a limb nor accept a single thing they offer you. If you get so far as this without speaking, elf-women come to you in the likeness of your mother, your sister, or any other relation, and beg you to come with them, using every art and entreaty; but beware you neither move nor speak. And if you can continue to keep silent and motionless all the night, until you see the first streak of dawn, then start up and cry aloud, «Praise be to God! His daylight filleth the heavens!»

As soon as you have said this, the elves will leave you, and with you all the wealth they have used to entice you, which will now be yours.

But should you either answer, or accept of their offers, you will from that moment become mad.

On the night of one Christmas Eve, a man named Fusi was out on the cross-roads, and managed to resist all the entreaties and proffers of the elves, until one of them offered him a large lump of mutton-suet, and begged him to take a bite of it. Fusi, who had up to this time gallantly resisted all such offers as gold and silver and diamonds and such filthy lucre, could hold out no longer, and crying, «Seldom have I refused a bite of mutton-suet,» he went mad.

ERNST MORITZ ARNDT

(1769–1860)

Sprung from the sturdy peasant stock of the north, to which patriotism is a chief virtue, Ernst Moritz Arndt first saw the light at Schoritz, Island of Rügen (then a dependency of Sweden), December 29th, 1769. His father, once a serf, had achieved a humble independence, and he destined his clever son for the ministry, the one vocation open to him which meant honor and advancement. The young man studied theology at Greifswald and Jena, but later turned his attention exclusively to history and literature. His early life is delightfully described in his ‹Stories and Recollections of Childhood.› His youth was molded by the influence of Goethe, Klopstock, Bürger, and Voss. After completing his university studies he traveled extensively in Austria, Hungary, and Northern Italy. His account of these journeys, published in 1802, shows his keen observation of men and affairs.

Ernst Arndt

He began his long service to his country by his ‹History of Serfdom in Pomerania and Sweden,› which contributed largely to the general abolition of the ancient abuse. He became professor of history in the University of Greifswald in 1806, and about that time began to publish the first series of the ‹Spirit of the Times.› These were stirring appeals to rouse the Germans against the oppressions of Napoleon. In consequence he was obliged to flee to Sweden. After three years he returned under an assumed name, and again took up his work at Greifswald. In 1812, after the occupation of Pomerania by the French, his fierce denunciations again forced him to flee, this time to Russia, the only refuge open to him. There he joined Baron von Stein, who eagerly made use of him in his schemes for the liberation of Germany. At this time his finest poems were written: those kindling war songs that appealed so strongly to German patriotism, when «songs were sermons and sermons were songs.» The most famous of these, ‹What is the German's Fatherland?› ‹The Song of the Field-marshal,› and ‹The God Who Made Earth's Iron Hoard,› still live as national lyrics.

Arndt was also constantly occupied in writing pamphlets of the most stirring nature, as their titles show:—‹The Rhine, Germany's

River, but Never Germany's Boundary'; 'The Soldier's Catechism'; and 'The Militia and the General Levy.' After the disasters of the French in Russia, he returned to Germany, unceasingly devoted to his task of rousing the people. Though by birth a Swede, he had become at heart a Prussian, seeing in Prussia alone the possibility of German unity.

In 1817 he married Schleiermacher's sister, and the following year was appointed professor of history in the newly established University of Bonn. Shortly afterward suspended, on account of his liberal views, he was forced to spend twenty years in retirement. His leisure gave opportunity for literary work, however, and he availed himself of it by producing several historical treatises and his interesting 'Reminiscences of My Public Life.' One of the first acts of Frederick William IV., after his accession, was to restore Arndt to his professorship at Bonn. He took a lively interest in the events of 1848, and belonged to the deputation that offered the imperial crown to the King of Prussia. He continued in the hope and the advocacy of German unity, though he did not live to see it realized. The ninetieth birthday of «Father Arndt,» as he was fondly called by his countrymen, was celebrated with general rejoicing throughout Germany. He died shortly afterward, on January 29th, 1860.

Arndt's importance as a poet is due to the stirring scenes of his earlier life and the political needs of Germany. He was no genius. He was not even a deep scholar. His only great work is his war-songs and patriotic ballads. Germany honors his manly character and patriotic zeal in that stormy period of Liberation which led through many apparent defeats to the united Empire of to-day.

The best German biographies are that of Schenkel (1869), W. Baur (1882), and Langenberg (1869); the latter in 1878 edited 'Arndt's Letters to a Friend.' J. R. Seeley's 'Life and Adventures of E. M. Arndt' (1879) is founded on the latter's 'Reminiscences of My Public Life.'

WHAT IS THE GERMAN'S FATHERLAND?

What is the German's fatherland?
Is it Prussia, or the Swabian's land?
Is it where the grape glows on the Rhine?
Where sea-gulls skim the Baltic's brine?
Oh no! more grand
Must be the German's fatherland!

What is the German's fatherland?
Bavaria, or the Styrian's land?

Is it where the Master's cattle graze?
Is it the Mark where forges blaze?
Oh no! more grand
Must be the German's fatherland!

What is the German's fatherland?
Westphalia? Pomerania's strand?
Where the sand drifts along the shore?
Or where the Danube's surges roar?
Oh no! more grand
Must be the German's fatherland!

What is the German's fatherland?
Now name for me that mighty land!
Is it Switzerland? or Tyrols, tell; —
The land and people pleased me well!
Oh no! more grand
Must be the German's fatherland!

What is the German's fatherland?
Now name for me that mighty land!
Ah! Austria surely it must be,
So rich in fame and victory.
Oh no! more grand
Must be the German's fatherland!

What is the German's fatherland?
Tell me the name of that great land!
Is it the land which princely hate
Tore from the Emperor and the State?
Oh no! more grand
Must be the German's fatherland!

What is the German's fatherland?
Now name at last that mighty land!
«Where'er resounds the German tongue,
Where'er its hymns to God are sung!»
That is the land,
Brave German, that thy fatherland!

That is the German's fatherland!
Where binds like oak the claspèd hand,
Where truth shines clearly from the eyes,
And in the heart affection lies.
Be this the land,
Brave German, this thy fatherland!

That is the German's fatherland!
Where scorn shall foreign triflers brand,
Where all are foes whose deeds offend,
Where every noble soul's a friend:
Be this the land,
All Germany shall be the land!

All Germany that land shall be:
Watch o'er it, God, and grant that we,
With German hearts, in deed and thought,
May love it truly as we ought.
Be this the land,
All Germany shall be the land!

THE SONG OF THE FIELD-MARSHAL

What's the blast from the trumpets? Hussars, to the fray!
The field-marshal* rides in the rolling mellay;
So gay on his mettlesome war-horse he goes,
So fierce waves his glittering sword at his foes.
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

Oh, see as he comes how his piercing eyes gleam!
Oh, see how behind him his snowy locks stream!
So fresh blooms his age, like a well-ripened wine,
He may well as the battle-field's autocrat shine.
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

It was he, when his country in ruin was laid,
Who sternly to heaven uplifted his blade,
And swore on the brand, with a heart burning high,
To show Frenchmen the trade that the Prussians could ply.
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

That oath he has kept. When the battle-cry rang,
Hey! how the gray youth to the saddle upsprang!
He made a sweep-dance for the French in the room,
And swept the land clean with a steel-ended broom.
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

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*Blücher.

At Lützen, in the meadow, he kept up such a strife,
That many thousand Frenchmen there yielded up their life;
That thousands ran headlong for very life's sake,
And thousands are sleeping who never will wake.
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

On the water, at Katzbach, his oath was in trim:
He taught in a moment the Frenchmen to swim.
Farewell, Frenchmen; fly to the Baltic to save!
You mob without breeches, catch whales for your grave.
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

At Wartburg, on the Elbe, how he cleared him a path!
Neither fortress nor town barred the French from his wrath;
Like hares o'er the field they all scuttled away,
While behind them the hero rang out his Huzza!
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

At Leipzig—O glorious fight on the plain!—
French luck and French might strove against him in vain;
There beaten and stiff lay the foe in their blood,
And there dear old Blücher a field-marshal stood.
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful: they're shouting hurrah!

Then sound, blaring trumpets! Hussars, charge once more!
Ride, field-marshal, ride like the wind in the roar!
To the Rhine, over Rhine, in your triumph advance!
Brave sword of our country, right on into France!
And here are the Germans: juchheirassassa!
The Germans are joyful; they're shouting hurrah!

PATRIOTIC SONG

GOD, who gave iron, purposed ne'er
That man should be a slave:
Therefore the sabre, sword, and spear
In his right hand He gave.
Therefore He gave him fiery mood,
Fierce speech, and free-born breath,
That he might fearlessly the feud
Maintain through life and death.

Therefore will we what God did say,
With honest truth, maintain,
And ne'er a fellow-creature slay,
A tyrant's pay to gain!
But he shall fall by stroke of brand
Who fights for sin and shame,
And not inherit German land
With men of German name.

O Germany, bright fatherland!
O German love, so true!
Thou sacred land, thou beauteous land,
We swear to thee anew!
Outlawed, each knave and coward shall
The crow and raven feed;
But we will to the battle all—
Revenge shall be our meed.

Flash forth, flash forth, whatever can,
To bright and flaming life!
Now all ye Germans, man for man,
Forth to the holy strife!
Your hands lift upward to the sky—
Your heart shall upward soar—
And man for man, let each one cry,
Our slavery is o'er!

Let sound, let sound, whatever can,
Trumpet and fife and drum,
This day our sabres, man for man,
To stain with blood we come;
With hangman's and with Frenchmen's blood,
O glorious day of ire,
That to all Germans soundeth good—
Day of our great desire!

Let wave, let wave, whatever can,
Standard and banner wave!
Here will we purpose, man for man,
To grace a hero's grave.
Advance, ye brave ranks, hardily—
Your banners wave on high;
We'll gain us freedom's victory,
Or freedom's death we'll die!

EDWIN ARNOLD

(1832–)

The favorite and now venerable English poet, Edwin Arnold, showed his skill in smooth and lucid verse early in life. In 1852, when twenty years of age, he won the Newdigate Prize at Oxford for a poem, ‘The Feast of Belshazzar.’ Two years later, after graduation with honors, he was named second master of Edward the Sixth's School at Birmingham; and, a few years subsequent, principal of the Government Sanskrit College at Poona, in India. In 1856 he published ‘Griselda, a Tragedy’; and after his return to London in 1861, translations from the Greek of Herodotus and the Sanskrit of the Indian classic ‘Hitopadeça,’ the latter under the name of ‘The Book of Good Counsels.’ There followed from his pen ‘Education in India’; ‘A History of the Administration in India under the Late Marquis of Dalhousie’ (1862–64); and ‘The Poets of Greece,’ a collection of fine passages (1869). In addition to his other labors he has been one of the editors-in-chief of the London Daily Telegraph.

Saturated with the Orient, familiar with every aspect of its civilization, moral and religious life, history and feeling, Sir Edwin's literary work has attested his knowledge in a large number of smaller poetical productions, and a group of religious epics of long and impressive extent. Chiefest among them ranks that on the life and teachings of Buddha, ‘The Light of Asia; or, The Great Renunciation’ (1879). It has passed through more than eighty editions in this country, and almost as many in England. In recognition of this work Mr. Arnold was decorated by the King of Siam with the Order of the White Elephant. Two years after its appearance he published ‘Mahâbhârata,’ ‘Indian Idylls,’ and in 1883, ‘Pearls of the Faith; or, Islam's Rosary: Being the Ninety-nine Beautiful Names of Allah, with Comments in Verse from Various Oriental Sources.’ In 1886 the Sultan conferred on him the Imperial Order of Osmanli, and in 1888 he was created Knight Commander of the Indian Empire by Queen Victoria. ‘Sa'di in the Garden; or, The Book of Love’ (1888), a poem turning on a part of the ‘Bôstâni’ of the Persian poet Sa'di, brought Sir Edwin the Order of the Lion and Sun from the Shah of Persia. In 1888 he published also ‘Poems National and Non-Oriental.’ Since then he has written ‘The Light of the World’; ‘Potiphar's Wife, and Other Poems’ (1892); ‘The Iliad and Odyssey of Asia,’ and in prose, ‘India Revisited’ (1891); ‘Seas and Lands’;

‹Japonica,› which treats of life and things Japanese; and ‹Adzuma, the Japanese Wife: a Play in Four Acts› (1893). During his travels in Japan the Emperor decorated him with the Order of the Rising Sun. In 1893 Sir Edwin was chosen President of the Birmingham and Midland Institute. His latest volume, ‹The Tenth Muse and Other Poems,› appeared in 1895.

‹The Light of Asia,› the most successful of his works, attracted instant attention on its appearance, as a novelty of rich Indian local color. In substance it is a graceful and dramatic paraphrase of the mass of more or less legendary tales of the life and spiritual career of the Buddha, Prince Gautama, and a summary of the principles of the great religious system originating with him. It is lavishly embellished with Indian allusions, and expresses incidentally the very spirit of the East. In numerous cantos, proceeding from episode to episode of its mystical hero's career, its effect is that of a loftily ethical, picturesque, and fascinating biography, in highly polished verse. The metre selected is a graceful and dignified one, especially associated with ‹Paradise Lost› and other of the foremost classics of English verse. Sir Edwin says of the poem in his preface, «I have sought, by the medium of an imaginary Buddhist votary, to depict the life and character and indicate the philosophy of that noble hero and reformer, Prince Gautama of India, the founder of Buddhism;» and the poet has admirably, if most flatteringly, succeeded. The poem has been printed in innumerable cheap editions as well as those *de luxe;* and while it has been criticized as too complaisant a study of even primitive Buddhism, it is beyond doubt a lyrical tract of eminent utility as well as seductive charm.

THE YOUTH OF BUDDHA

From ‹The Light of Asia›

THIS reverence
Lord Buddha kept to all his schoolmasters,
Albeit beyond their learning taught; in speech
Right gentle, yet so wise; princely of mien,
Yet softly mannered; modest, deferent,
And tender-hearted, though of fearless blood:
No bolder horseman in the youthful band
E'er rode in gay chase of the shy gazelles;
No keener driver of the chariot
In mimic contest scoured the palace courts:
Yet in mid-play the boy would oft-times pause,
Letting the deer pass free; would oft-times yield

His half-won race because the laboring steeds
Fetched painful breath; or if his princely mates
Saddened to lose, or if some wistful dream
Swept o'er his thoughts. And ever with the years
Waxed this compassionateness of our Lord,
Even as a great tree grows from two soft leaves
To spread its shade afar; but hardly yet
Knew the young child of sorrow, pain, or tears,
Save as strange names for things not felt by kings,
Nor ever to be felt. But it befell
In the royal garden on a day of spring,
A flock of wild swans passed, voyaging north
To their nest-places on Himâla's breast.
Calling in love-notes down their snowy line
The bright birds flew, by fond love piloted;
And Devadatta, cousin of the Prince,
Pointed his bow, and loosed a willful shaft
Which found the wide wing of the foremost swan
Broad-spread to glide upon the free blue road,
So that it fell, the bitter arrow fixed,
Bright scarlet blood-gouts staining the pure plumes.
Which seeing, Prince Siddârtha took the bird
Tenderly up, rested it in his lap,—
Sitting with knees crossed, as Lord Buddha sits,—
And, soothing with a touch the wild thing's fright,
Composed its ruffled vans, calmed its quick heart,
Caressed it into peace with light kind palms
As soft as plantain leaves an hour unrolled;
And while the left hand held, the right hand drew
The cruel steel forth from the wound, and laid
Cool leaves and healing honey on the smart.
Yet all so little knew the boy of pain,
That curiously into his wrist he pressed
The arrow's barb, and winced to feel it sting,
And turned with tears to soothe his bird again.
Then some one came who said, «My Prince hath shot
A swan, which fell among the roses here;
He bids me pray you send it. Will you send?»
«Nay,» quoth Siddârtha: «If the bird were dead,
To send it to the slayer might be well,
But the swan lives; my cousin hath but killed
The godlike speed which throbbed in this white wing.»
And Devadatta answered, «The wild thing,
Living or dead, is his who fetched it down;

'Twas no man's in the clouds, but fallen 'tis mine.
Give me my prize, fair cousin.» Then our Lord
Laid the swan's neck beside his own smooth cheek
And gravely spake:—«Say no! the bird is mine,
The first of myriad things which shall be mine
By right of mercy and love's lordliness.
For now I know, by what within me stirs,
That I shall teach compassion unto men
And be a speechless world's interpreter,
Abating this accursed flood of woe,
Not man's alone; but if the Prince disputes,
Let him submit this matter to the wise
And we will wait their word.» So was it done;
In full divan the business had debate,
And many thought this thing and many that,
Till there arose an unknown priest who said,
«If life be aught, the savior of a life
Owns more the living thing than he can own
Who sought to slay; the slayer spoils and wastes,
The cherisher sustains: give him the bird.»
Which judgment all found just; but when the King
Sought out the sage for honor, he was gone;
And some one saw a hooded snake glide forth.
The gods come oft-times thus! So our Lord Buddha
Began his works of mercy.

Yet not more
Knew he as yet of grief than that one bird's,
Which, being healed, went joyous to its kind.
But on another day the King said, «Come,
Sweet son! and see the pleasaunce of the spring,
And how the fruitful earth is wooed to yield
Its riches to the reaper; how my realm—
Which shall be thine when the pile flames for me—
Feeds all its mouths and keeps the King's chest filled.
Fair is the season with new leaves, bright blooms,
Green grass, and cries of plow-time.» So they rode
Into a land of wells and gardens, where,
All up and down the rich red loam, the steers
Strained their strong shoulders in the creaking yoke,
Dragging the plows; the fat soil rose and rolled
In smooth dark waves back from the plow; who drove
Planted both feet upon the leaping share
To make the furrow deep; among the palms

The tinkle of the rippling water rang,
And where it ran the glad earth 'broidered it
With balsams and the spears of lemon-grass.
Elsewhere were sowers who went forth to sow;
And all the jungle laughed with nesting-songs,
And all the thickets rustled with small life
Of lizard, bee, beetle, and creeping things,
Pleased at the springtime. In the mango-sprays
The sunbirds flashed; alone at his green forge
Toiled the loud coppersmith; bee-eaters hawked,
Chasing the purple butterflies; beneath,
Striped squirrels raced, the mynas perked and picked,
The nine brown sisters chattered in the thorn,
The pied fish-tiger hung above the pool,
The egrets stalked among the buffaloes,
The kites sailed circles in the golden air;
About the painted temple peacocks flew,
The blue doves cooed from every well, far off
The village drums beat for some marriage feast;
All things spoke peace and plenty, and the Prince
Saw and rejoiced. But, looking deep, he saw
The thorns which grow upon this rose of life:
How the swart peasant sweated for his wage,
Toiling for leave to live; and how he urged
The great-eyed oxen through the flaming hours,
Goading their velvet flanks: then marked he, too,
How lizard fed on ant, and snake on him,
And kite on both; and how the fish-hawk robbed
The fish-tiger of that which it had seized;
The shrike chasing the bulbul, which did chase
The jeweled butterflies; till everywhere
Each slew a slayer and in turn was slain,
Life living upon death. So the fair show
Veiled one vast, savage, grim conspiracy
Of mutual murder, from the worm to man,
Who himself kills his fellow; seeing which—
The hungry plowman and his laboring kine,
Their dewlaps blistered with the bitter yoke,
The rage to live which makes all living strife—
The Prince Siddârtha sighed. « Is this,» he said,
«That happy earth they brought me forth to see?
How salt with sweat the peasant's bread! how hard
The oxen's service! in the brake how fierce
The war of weak and strong! i' th' air what plots!

No refuge e'en in water. Go aside
A space, and let me muse on what ye show."
So saying, the good Lord Buddha seated him
Under a jambu-tree, with ankles crossed,
As holy statues sit, and first began
To meditate this deep disease of life,
What its far source and whence its remedy.
So vast a pity filled him, such wide love
For living things, such passion to heal pain,
That by their stress his princely spirit passed
To ecstasy, and, purged from mortal taint
Of sense and self, the boy attained thereat
Dhyâna, first step of "the Path."

THE PURE SACRIFICE OF BUDDHA

From 'The Light of Asia'

Onward he passed,
Exceeding sorrowful, seeing how men
Fear so to die they are afraid to fear,
Lust so to live they dare not love their life,
But plague it with fierce penances, belike
To please the gods who grudge pleasure to man;
Belike to balk hell by self-kindled hells;
Belike in holy madness, hoping soul
May break the better through their wasted flesh.
"O flowerets of the field!" Siddârtha said,
"Who turn your tender faces to the sun,—
Glad of the light, and grateful with sweet breath
Of fragrance and these robes of reverence donned,
Silver and gold and purple,—none of ye
Miss perfect living, none of ye despoil
Your happy beauty. O ye palms! which rise
Eager to pierce the sky and drink the wind
Blown from Malaya and the cool blue seas;
What secret know ye that ye grow content,
From time of tender shoot to time of fruit,
Murmuring such sun-songs from your feathered crowns?
Ye too, who dwell so merry in the trees,—
Quick-darting parrots, bee-birds, bulbuls, doves,—
None of ye hate your life, none of ye deem
To strain to better by foregoing needs!
But man, who slays ye—being lord—is wise,

And wisdom, nursed on blood, cometh thus forth
In self-tormentings!»

While the Master spake
Blew down the mount the dust of pattering feet,
White goats and black sheep winding slow their way
With many a lingering nibble at the tufts,
And wanderings from the path, where water gleamed
Or wild figs hung. But always as they strayed
The herdsman cried, or slung his sling, and kept
The silly crowd still moving to the plain.
A ewe with couplets in the flock there was:
Some hurt had lamed one lamb, which toiled behind
Bleeding, while in the front its fellow skipped,
And the vexed dam hither and thither ran,
Fearful to lose this little one or that;
Which when our Lord did mark, full tenderly
He took the limping lamb upon his neck,
Saying, «Poor wooly mother, be at peace!
Whither thou goest I will bear thy care;
'Twere all as good to ease one beast of grief
As sit and watch the sorrows of the world
In yonder caverns with the priests who pray.»
«But,» spake he of the herdsmen, «wherefore, friends!
Drive ye the flocks adown under high noon,
Since 'tis at evening that men fold their sheep?»

And answer gave the peasants:—«We are sent
To fetch a sacrifice of goats fivescore,
And fivescore sheep, the which our Lord the King
Slayeth this night in worship of his gods.»

Then said the Master, «I will also go!»
So paced he patiently, bearing the lamb
Beside the herdsmen in the dust and sun,
The wistful ewe low bleating at his feet.
Whom, when they came unto the river-side,
A woman—dove-eyed, young, with tearful face
And lifted hands—saluted, bending low:—
«Lord! thou art he,» she said, «who yesterday
Had pity on me in the fig grove here,
Where I live lone and reared my child; but he,
Straying amid the blossoms, found a snake,
Which twined about his wrist, while he did laugh
And teased the quick forked tongue and opened mouth

Of that cold playmate. But alas! ere long
He turned so pale and still, I could not think
Why he should cease to play, and let my breast
Fall from his lips. And one said, 'He is sick
Of poison;' and another, 'He will die.'
But I, who could not lose my precious boy,
Prayed of them physic, which might bring the light
Back to his eyes; it was so very small,
That kiss-mark of the serpent, and I think
It could not hate him, gracious as he was,
Nor hurt him in his sport. And some one said,
'There is a holy man upon the hill—
Lo! now he passeth in the yellow robe;
Ask of the Rishi if there be a cure
For that which ails thy son.' Whereon I came
Trembling to thee, whose brow is like a god's,
And wept and drew the face-cloth from my babe,
Praying thee tell what simples might be good.
And thou, great sir! didst spurn me not, but gaze
With gentle eyes and touch with patient hand;
Then draw the face-cloth back, saying to me,
'Yea! little sister, there is that might heal
Thee first, and him, if thou couldst fetch the thing;
For they who seek physicians bring to them
What is ordained. Therefore, I pray thee, find
Black mustard-seed, a tola; only mark
Thou take it not from any hand or house
Where father, mother, child, or slave hath died;
It shall be well if thou canst find such seed.'
Thus didst thou speak, my lord!"

The Master smiled
Exceeding tenderly. "Yea! I spake thus,
Dear Kisagôtami! But didst thou find
The seed?"

"I went, Lord, clasping to my breast
The babe, grown colder, asking at each hut,—
Here in the jungle and toward the town,—
'I pray you, give me mustard, of your grace,
A tola—black;' and each who had it gave,
For all the poor are piteous to the poor:
But when I asked, 'In my friend's household here
Hath any peradventure ever died—
Husband or wife, or child, or slave?' they said:—

‘O sister! what is this you ask? the dead
Are very many and the living few!’
So, with sad thanks, I gave the mustard back,
And prayed of others, but the others said,
‘Here is the seed, but we have lost our slave!’
‘Here is the seed, but our good man is dead!’
‘Here is some seed, but he that sowed it died
Between the rain-time and the harvesting!’
Ah, sir! I could not find a single house
Where there was mustard-seed and none had died!
Therefore I left my child—who would not suck
Nor smile—beneath the wild vines by the stream,
To seek thy face and kiss thy feet, and pray
Where I might find this seed and find no death,
If now, indeed, my baby be not dead,
As I do fear, and as they said to me.»

«My sister! thou hast found,» the Master said,
«Searching for what none finds, that bitter balm
I had to give thee. He thou lovedst slept
Dead on thy bosom yesterday; to-day
Thou know'st the whole wide world weeps with thy woe;
The grief which all hearts share grows less for one.
Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
Thy tears, and win the secret of that curse
Which makes sweet love our anguish, and which drives
O'er flowers and pastures to the sacrifice—
As these dumb beasts are driven—men their lords.
I seek that secret: bury thou thy child!»

So entered they the city side by side,
The herdsmen and the Prince, what time the sun
Gilded slow Sona's distant stream, and threw
Long shadows down the street and through the gate
Where the King's men kept watch. But when these saw
Our Lord bearing the lamb, the guards stood back,
The market-people drew their wains aside,
In the bazaar buyers and sellers stayed
The war of tongues to gaze on that mild face;
The smith, with lifted hammer in his hand,
Forgot to strike; the weaver left his web,
The scribe his scroll, the money-changer lost
His count of cowries; from the unwatched rice
Shiva's white bull fed free; the wasted milk
Ran o'er the lota while the milkers watched

The passage of our Lord moving so meek,
With yet so beautiful a majesty.
But most the women gathering in the doors
Asked, «Who is this that brings the sacrifice
So graceful and peace-giving as he goes?
What is his caste? whence hath he eyes so sweet?
Can he be Sâkra or the Devaraj?»
And others said, «It is the holy man
Who dwelleth with the Rishis on the hill.»
But the Lord paced, in meditation lost,
Thinking, «Alas! for all my sheep which have
No shepherd; wandering in the night with none
To guide them; bleating blindly toward the knife
Of Death, as these dumb beasts which are their kin.»

Then some one told the King, «There cometh here
A holy hermit, bringing down the flock
Which thou didst bid to crown the sacrifice.»

The King stood in his hall of offering;
On either hand the white-robed Brahmans ranged
Muttered their mantras, feeding still the fire
Which roared upon the midmost altar. There
From scented woods flickered bright tongues of flame,
Hissing and curling as they licked the gifts
Of ghee and spices and the Soma juice,
The joy of Indra. Round about the pile
A slow, thick, scarlet streamlet smoked and ran,
Sucked by the sand, but ever rolling down,
The blood of bleating victims. One such lay,
A spotted goat, long-horned, its head bound back
With munja grass; at its stretched throat the knife
Pressed by a priest, who murmured, «This, dread gods,
Of many yajnas cometh as the crown
From Bimbasâra: take ye joy to see
The spirted blood, and pleasure in the scent
Of rich flesh roasting 'mid the fragrant flames;
Let the King's sins be laid upon this goat,
And let the fire consume them burning it,
For now I strike.»

But Buddha softly said,
«Let him not strike, great King!» and therewith loosed
The victim's bonds, none staying him, so great
His presence was. Then, craving leave, he spake

Of life, which all can take, but none can give,
Life, which all creatures love and strive to keep,
Wonderful, dear and pleasant unto each,
Even to the meanest; yea, a boon to all
Where pity is, for pity makes the world
Soft to the weak and noble for the strong.
Unto the dumb lips of his flock he lent
Sad, pleading words, showing how man, who prays
For mercy to the gods, is merciless,
Being as god to those; albeit all life
Is linked and kin, and what we slay have given
Meek tribute of the milk and wool, and set
Fast trust upon the hands which murder them.
Also he spake of what the holy books
Do surely teach, how that at death some sink
To bird and beast, and these rise up to man
In wanderings of the spark which grows purged flame.
So were the sacrifice new sin, if so
The fated passage of a soul be stayed.
Nor, spake he, shall one wash his spirit clean
By blood; nor gladden gods, being good, with blood;
Nor bribe them, being evil; nay, nor lay
Upon the brow of innocent bound beasts
One hair's weight of that answer all must give
For all things done amiss or wrongfully,
Alone, each for himself, reckoning with that
The fixed arithmetic of the universe,
Which meteth good for good and ill for ill,
Measure for measure, unto deeds, words, thoughts;
Watchful, aware, implacable, unmoved;
Making all futures fruits of all the pasts.
Thus spake he, breathing words so piteous
With such high lordliness of ruth and right,
The priests drew back their garments o'er the hands
Crimsoned with slaughter, and the King came near,
Standing with clasped palms reverencing Buddha;
While still our Lord went on, teaching how fair
This earth were if all living things be linked
In friendliness of common use of foods,
Bloodless and pure; the golden grain, bright fruits,
Sweet herbs which grow for all, the waters wan,
Sufficient drinks and meats. Which, when these heard,
The might of gentleness so conquered them,
The priests themselves scattered their altar-flames

And flung away the steel of sacrifice;
And through the land next day passed a decree
Proclaimed by criers, and in this wise graved
On rock and column:—«Thus the King's will is:
There hath been slaughter for the sacrifice
And slaying for the meat, but henceforth none
Shall spill the blood of life nor taste of flesh,
Seeing that knowledge grows, and life is one,
And mercy cometh to the merciful.»
So ran the edict, and from those days forth
Sweet peace hath spread between all living kind,
Man and the beasts which serve him, and the birds,
Of all those banks of Gunga where our Lord
Taught with his saintly pity and soft speech.

THE FAITHFULNESS OF YUDHISTHIRA

From ‹The Great Journey,› in the Mahâbhârata

Thenceforth alone the long-armed monarch strode,
Not looking back,—nay, not for Bhima's sake,—
But walking with his face set for the mount;
And the hound followed him,—only the hound.

After the deathly sands, the Mount; and lo!
Sâkra shone forth, the God, filling the earth
And heavens with thunder of his chariot-wheels.
«Ascend,» he said, «with me, Pritha's great son!»
But Yudhisthira answered, sore at heart
For those his kinsfolk, fallen on the way:—
«O Thousand-eyed, O Lord of all the gods,
Give that my brothers come with me, who fell!
Not without them is Swarga sweet to me.
She, too, the dear and kind and queenly,—she
Whose perfect virtue Paradise must crown,—
Grant her to come with us! Dost thou grant this?»

The God replied:—«In heaven thou shalt see
Thy kinsman and the Queen—these will attain—
And Krishna. Grieve no longer for thy dead,
Thou chief of men! their mortal covering stripped,
These have their places: but to thee the gods
Allot an unknown grace; Thou shalt go up,
Living and in thy form, to the immortal homes.»

But the King answered:—«O thou Wisest One,
Who know'st what was, and is, and is to be,
Still one more grace! This hound hath ate with me,
Followed me, loved me: must I leave him now?»

«Monarch,» spake Indra, «thou art now as we,—
Deathless, divine; thou art become a god;
Glory and power and gifts celestial,
And all the joys of heaven are thine for aye:
What hath a beast with these? Leave here thy hound.»

Yet Yudhisthira answered:—«O Most High,
O, Thousand-eyed and wisest! can it be
That one exalted should seem pitiless?
Nay, let me lose such glory: for its sake
I cannot leave one living thing I loved.»

Then sternly Indră spake:—«He is unclean,
And into Swarga such shall enter not.
The Krodhavasha's wrath destroys the fruits
Of sacrifice, if dogs defile the fire.
Bethink thee, Dharmaraj; quit now this beast!
That which is seemly is not hard of heart.»

Still he replied:—«'Tis written that to spurn
A suppliant equals in offense to slay
A twice-born; wherefore, not for Swarga's bliss
Quit I, Mahendra, this poor clinging dog,—
So without any hope or friend save me,
So wistful, fawning for my faithfulness;
So agonized to die, unless I help
Who among men was called steadfast and just.»

Quoth Indra:—«Nay, the altar-flame is foul
Where a dog passeth; angry angels sweep
The ascending smoke aside, and all the fruits
Of offering, and the merit of the prayer
Of him whom a hound toucheth. Leave it here!
He that will enter heaven must enter pure.
Why didst thou quit thy brethren on the way,
And Krishna, and the dear-loved Draupadí,
Attaining, firm and glorious, to this Mount
Through perfect deeds, to linger for a brute?
Hath Yudhisthira vanquished self, to melt
With one poor passion at the door of bliss?

Stay'st thou for this, who didst not stay for them,—
Draupadí, Bhima?»

But the King yet spake:—
«'Tis known that none can hurt or help the dead.
They, the delightful ones, who sank and died,
Following my footsteps, could not live again
Though I had turned,—therefore I did not turn;
But could help profit, I had stayed to help.
There be four sins, O Sâkra, grievous sins:
The first is making suppliants despair,
The second is to slay a nursing wife,
The third is spoiling Brahmans' goods by force,
The fourth is injuring an ancient friend.
These four I deem not direr than the crime,
If one, in coming forth from woe to weal,
Abandon any meanest comrade then.»

Straight as he spake, brightly great Indra smiled;
Vanished the hound, and in its stead stood there
The Lord of Death and Justice, Dharma's self!
Sweet were the words which fell from those dread lips,
Precious the lovely praise:—«O thou true King,
Thou that dost bring to harvest the good seed
Of Pandu's righteousness; thou that hast ruth
As he before, on all which lives!—O son!
I tried thee in the Dwaita wood, what time
They smote thy brothers, bringing water; then
Thou prayedst for Nakula's life—tender and just—
Nor Bhima's nor Arjuna's, true to both,
To Madri as to Kunti, to both queens.
Hear thou my word! Because thou didst not mount
This car divine, lest the poor hound be shent
Who looked to thee, lo! there is none in heaven
Shall sit above thee, King!—Bhârata's son!
Enter thou now to the eternal joys,
Living and in thy form. Justice and Love
Welcome thee, Monarch! thou shalt throne with us.»

HE AND SHE

"SHE is dead!" they said to him: "come away;
Kiss her and leave her,—thy love is clay!"

They smoothed her tresses of dark-brown hair;
On her forehead of stone they laid it fair;

Over her eyes that gazed too much
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;

About her brows and beautiful face
They tied her veil and her marriage lace,

And drew on her white feet her white-silk shoes,—
Which were the whitest no eye could choose,—

And over her bosom they crossed her hands,
"Come away!" they said, "God understands."

And there was silence, and nothing there
But silence, and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses and rosemary;
And they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she."

And they held their breath till they left the room,
With a shudder, to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,

He lit his lamp, and took the key
And turned it—alone again, he and she.

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet cheek.

He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name she loved erewhile.

He and she; still she did not move
To any passionate whisper of love.

Then he said, "Cold lips and breasts without breath,
Is there no voice, no language of death,

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct, intense?

«See, now; I will listen with soul, not ear:
What was the secret of dying, dear?

«Was it the infinite wonder of all
That you ever could let life's flower fall?

«Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

«Was the miracle greater to find how deep
Beyond all dreams sank downward that sleep?

«Did life roll back its record dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?

«And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so, what a wisdom love is?

«O perfect dead! O dead most dear!
I hold the breath of my soul to hear.

«I listen as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven, and you do not tell.

«There must be pleasure in dying, sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!

«I would tell you, darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere your hot tears upon my brow shed, —

«I would say, though the Angel of Death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid, —

«You should not ask vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which of all deaths was the chiefest surprise.

«The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring.»

Ah, foolish world! O most kind dead!
Though he told me, who will believe it was said?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the sweet, soft voice, in the dear old way,

«The utmost wonder is this, — I hear
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, dear;

«And am your angel, who was your bride,
And know that though dead, I have never died.»

AFTER DEATH

From ‹Pearls of the Faith›

He made life—and He takes it—but instead
Gives more: praise the Restorer, Al-Mu'hid!

He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort faithful friends:—

Faithful friends! it lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, «Abdullah's dead!»
Weeping at my feet and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your cries and prayers,
Yet I smile and whisper this:—
«I am not that thing you kiss;
Cease your tears and let it lie:
It *was* mine, it is not I.»

Sweet friends! what the women lave
For its last bed in the grave
Is a tent which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which at last
Like a hawk my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room;
The wearer, not the garb; the plume
Of the falcon, not the bars
Which kept him from the splendid stars.

Loving friends! be wise, and dry
Straightway every weeping eye:
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell, one
Out of which the pearl is gone.
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.
'Tis an earthen jar whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of His treasury,
A mind which loved Him: let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in His store!

Allah Mu'hid, Allah most good!
Now Thy grace is understood:
Now my heart no longer wonders
What Al-Barsakh is, which sunders
Life from death, and death from Heaven:
Nor the «Paradises Seven»
Which the happy dead inherit;
Nor those «birds» which bear each spirit
Toward the Throne, «green birds and white,»
Radiant, glorious, swift their flight!
Now the long, long darkness ends.
Yet ye wail, my foolish friends,
While the man whom ye call «dead»
In unbroken bliss instead
Lives, and loves you: lost, 'tis true
By any light which shines for you;
But in light ye cannot see
Of unfulfilled felicity,
And enlarging Paradise;
Lives the life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell;
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face
A heart-beat's time, a gray ant's pace.
When ye come where I have stepped,
Ye will marvel why ye wept;
Ye will know, by true love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain,—
Sunshine still must follow rain!
Only not at death, for death—
Now I see—is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, that is of all life centre.

Know ye Allah's law is love,
Viewed from Allah's Throne above;
Be ye firm of trust, and come
Faithful onward to your home!
«*La Allah illa Allah!* Yea,
Mu'hid! Restorer! Sovereign!» say!

He who died at Azan gave
This to those that made his grave.

SOLOMON AND THE ANT

From ‹Pearls of the Faith›

Say Ar-Raheen! call Him «Compassionate,»
For He is pitiful to small and great.

'Tis written that the serving angels stand
Beside God's throne, ten myriads on each hand,
Waiting, with wings outstretched and watchful eyes,
To do their Master's heavenly embassies.
Quicker than thought His high commands they read,
Swifter than light to execute them speed;
Bearing the word of power from star to star,
Some hither and some thither, near and far.
And unto these naught is too high or low,
Too mean or mighty, if He wills it so;
Neither is any creature, great or small,
Beyond His pity, which embraceth all,
Because His eye beholdeth all which are;
Sees without search, and counteth without care.
Nor lies the babe nearer the nursing-place
Than Allah's smallest child to Allah's grace;
Nor any ocean rolls so vast that He
Forgets one wave of all that restless sea.

Thus it is written; and moreover told
How Gabriel, watching by the Gates of Gold,
Heard from the Voice Ineffable this word
Of twofold mandate uttered by the Lord:—
«Go earthward! pass where Solomon hath made
His pleasure-house, and sitteth there arrayed,
Goodly and splendid—whom I crowned the king.
For at this hour my servant doth a thing
Unfitting: out of Nisibis there came
A thousand steeds with nostrils all aflame
And limbs of swiftness, prizes of the fight;
Lo! these are led, for Solomon's delight,
Before the palace, where he gazeth now
Filling his heart with pride at that brave show;
So taken with the snorting and the tramp
Of his war-horses, that Our silver lamp
Of eve is swung in vain, Our warning Sun
Will sink before his sunset-prayer's begun;

So shall the people say, ‘This king, our lord,
Loves more the long-maned trophies of his sword
Than the remembrance of his God!’ Go in!
Save thou My faithful servant from such sin.

«Also, upon the slope of Arafat,
Beneath a lote-tree which is fallen flat,
Toileth a yellow ant who carrieth home
Food for her nest, but so far hath she come
Her worn feet fail, and she will perish, caught
In the falling rain; but thou, make the way naught.
And help her to her people in the cleft
Of the black rock.»
Silently Gabriel left
The Presence, and prevented the king's sin,
And holp the little ant at entering in.

O Thou whose love is wide and great,
We praise Thee, «*The Compassionate.*»

THE AFTERNOON

From ‘Pearls of the Faith’

He is sufficient, and He makes suffice;
Praise thus again thy Lord, mighty and wise.

God is enough! thou, who in hope and fear
Toilest through desert-sands of life, sore tried,
Climb trustful over death's black ridge, for near
The bright wells shine: thou wilt be satisfied.

God doth suffice! O thou, the patient one,
Who puttest faith in Him, and none beside,
Bear yet thy load; under the setting sun
The glad tents gleam: thou wilt be satisfied.

By God's gold Afternoon! peace ye shall have:
Man is in loss except he live aright,
And help his fellow to be firm and brave,
Faithful and patient: then the restful night!

Al Mughni! best Rewarder! we
Endure; putting our trust in Thee.

THE TRUMPET

From ‹Pearls of the Faith›

Magnify Him, Al-Kaiyum; and so call
The «Self-subsisting» God who judgeth all.

When the trumpet shall sound,
On that day,
The wicked, slow-gathering,
Shall say,
«Is it long we have lain in our graves?
For it seems as an hour!»
Then will Israfil call them to judgment:
And none shall have power
To turn aside, this way or that;
And their voices will sink
To silence, except for the sounding
Of a noise, like the noise on the brink
Of the sea when its stones
Are dragged with a clatter and hiss
Down the shore, in the wild breakers' roar!
The sound of their woe shall be this:—

Then they who denied
That He liveth Eternal, «Self-made,»
Shall call to the mountains to crush them;
Amazed and affrayed.

Thou Self-subsistent, Living Lord!
Thy grace against that day afford.

ENVOI TO ‹THE LIGHT OF ASIA›

Ah, Blessed Lord! Oh, High Deliverer!
Forgive this feeble script which doth Thee wrong
Measuring with little wit Thy lofty Love.
Ah, Lover! Brother! Guide! Lamp of the Law!
I take my refuge in Thy name and Thee!
I take my refuge in Thy Law of God!
I take my refuge in Thy Order! *Om!*
The Dew is on the lotus—rise, great Sun!
And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave.
Om mani padme hum, the Sunrise comes!
The Dewdrop slips into the Shining Sea!

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GRISHMA; OR THE SEASON OF HEAT

Translated from Kalidasa's ‹Ritu Sanhâra›

With fierce noons beaming, moons of glory gleaming,
Full conduits streaming, where fair bathers lie,
With sunsets splendid, when the strong day, ended,
Melts into peace, like a tired lover's sigh—
So cometh summer nigh.

And nights of ebon blackness, laced with lustres
From starry clusters; courts of calm retreat,
Where wan rills warble over glistening marble;
Cold jewels, and the sandal, moist and sweet—
These for the time are meet

Of «Suchi,» dear one of the bright days, bringing
Love songs for singing which all hearts enthrall,
Wine cups that sparkle at the lips of lovers,
Odors and pleasures in the palace hall:
In «Suchi» these befall.

For then, with wide hips richly girt, and bosoms
Fragrant with blossoms, and with pearl strings gay,
Their new-laved hair unbound, and spreading round
Faint scents, the palace maids in tender play
The ardent heats allay

Of princely playmates. Through the gates their feet,
With lac-dye rosy and neat, and anklets ringing,
In music trip along, echoing the song
Of wild swans, all men's hearts by subtle singing
To Kama's service bringing;

For who, their sandal-scented breasts perceiving,
Their white pearls—weaving with the saffron stars
Girdles and diadems—their gold and gems
Linked upon waist and thigh, in Love's soft snares
Is not caught unawares?

Then lay they by their robes—no longer light
For the warm midnight—and their beauty cover
With woven veil too airy to conceal
Its dew-pearled softness; so, with youth clad over,
Each seeks her eager lover.

And sweet airs winnowed from the sandal fans,
   Faint balm that nests between those gem-bound breasts,
Voices of stream and bird, and clear notes heard
   From vina strings amid the songs' unrests,
            Wake passion. With light jests,

And sidelong glances, and coy smiles and dances,
   Each maid enhances newly sprung delight;
Quick leaps the fire of Love's divine desire,
   So kindled in the season when the Night
            With broadest moons is bright;

Till on the silvered terraces, sleep-sunken,
   With Love's draughts drunken, those close lovers lie;
And—all for sorrow there shall come To-morrow—
   The Moon, who watched them, pales in the gray sky,
            While the still Night doth die.

Then breaks fierce Day! The whirling dust is driven
   O'er earth and heaven, until the sun-scorched plain
Its road scarce shows for dazzling heat to those
   Who, far from home and love, journey in pain,
            Longing to rest again.

Panting and parched, with muzzles dry and burning,
   For cool streams yearning, herds of antelope
Haste where the brassy sky, banked black and high,
   Hath clouded promise. «There will be»—they hope—
            «Water beyond the tope!»

Sick with the glare, his hooded terrors failing,
   His slow coils trailing o'er the fiery dust,
The cobra glides to nighest shade, and hides
   His head beneath the peacock's train: he must
            His ancient foeman trust!

The purple peafowl, wholly overmastered
   By the red morning, droop with weary cries;
No stroke they make to slay that gliding snake
   Who creeps for shelter underneath the eyes
            Of their spread jewelries!

The jungle lord, the kingly tiger, prowling,
   For fierce thirst howling, orbs a-stare and red,
Sees without heed the elephants pass by him,
   Lolls his lank tongue, and hangs his bloody head,
      His mighty forces fled.

Nor heed the elephants that tiger, plucking
   Green leaves, and sucking with a dry trunk dew;
Tormented by the blazing day, they wander,
   And, nowhere finding water, still renew
      Their search—a woful crew!

With restless snout rooting the dark morasses,
   Where reeds and grasses on the soft slime grow,
The wild-boars, grunting ill-content and anger,
   Dig lairs to shield them from the torturing glow,
      Deep, deep as they can go.

The frog, for misery of his pool departing—
   'Neath that flame-darting ball—and waters drained
Down to their mud, crawls croaking forth, to cower
   Under the black-snake's coils, where there is gained
      A little shade; and, strained

To patience by such heat, scorching the jewel
   Gleaming so cruel on his venomous head,
That worm, whose tongue, as the blast burns along,
   Licks it for coolness—all discomfited—
      Strikes not his strange friend dead!

The pool, with tender-growing cups of lotus
   Once brightly blowing, hath no blossoms more!
Its fish are dead, its fearful cranes are fled,
   And crowding elephants its flowery shore
      Tramp to a miry floor.

With foam-strings roping from his jowls, and dropping
   From dried drawn lips, horns laid aback, and eyes
Mad with the drouth, and thirst-tormented mouth,
   Down-thundering from his mountain cavern flies
      The bison in wild wise,

Questing a water channel. Bare and scrannel
   The trees droop, where the crows sit in a row
With beaks agape. The hot baboon and ape
   Climb chattering to the bush. The buffalo
      Bellows. And locusts go

Choking the wells. Far o'er the hills and dells
Wanders th' affrighted eye, beholding blasted
The pleasant grass: the forest's leafy mass
Wilted; its waters waned; its grace exhausted;
Its creatures wasted.

Then leaps to view — blood-red and bright of hue —
As blooms sprung new on the Kusumbha-Tree —
The wild-fire's tongue, fanned by the wind, and flung
Furiously forth; the palms, canes, brakes, you see
Wrapped in one agony

Of lurid death! The conflagration, driven
In fiery levin, roars from jungle caves;
Hisses and blusters through the bamboo clusters,
Crackles across the curling grass, and drives
Into the river waves

The forest folk! Dreadful that flame to see
Coil from the cotton-tree — a snake of gold —
Violently break from root and trunk, to take
The bending boughs and leaves in deadly hold
Then passing — to enfold

New spoils! In herds, elephants, jackals, pards,
For anguish of such fate their enmity
Laying aside, burst for the river wide
Which flows between fair isles: in company
As friends they madly flee!

BUT Thee, my Best Beloved! may «Suchi» visit fair
With songs of secret waters cooling the quiet air,
Under blue buds of lotus beds, and pâtalas which shed
Fragrance and balm, while Moonlight weaves over thy happy head
Its silvery veil! So Nights and Days of Summer pass for thee
Amid the pleasure-palaces, with love and melody!

MATTHEW ARNOLD

(1822-1888)

BY GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY

Matthew Arnold, an English poet and critic, was born December 24th, 1822, at Laleham, in the Thames valley. He was the son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, best remembered as the master of Rugby in later years, and distinguished also as a historian of Rome. His mother was, by her maiden name, Mary Penrose, and long survived her husband. Arnold passed his school days at Winchester and Rugby, and went to Oxford in October, 1841. There, as also at school, he won scholarship and prize, and showed poetical talent. He was elected a fellow of Oriel in March, 1845. He taught for a short time at Rugby, but in 1847 became private secretary to Lord Lansdowne, who in 1851 appointed him school inspector. From that time he was engaged mainly in educational labors, as inspector and commissioner, and traveled frequently on the Continent examining foreign methods. He was also interested controversially in political and religious questions of the day, and altogether had a sufficient public life outside of literature. In 1851 he married Frances Lucy, daughter of Sir William Wightman, a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench, and by her had five children, three sons and two daughters.

His first volume of verse, 'The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems,' bears the date 1849; the second, 'Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems,' 1852; the third, 'Poems,' made up mainly from the two former, was published in 1853, and thereafter he added little to his poetic work. His first volume of similar significance in prose was 'Essays in Criticism,' issued in 1865. Throughout his mature life he was a constant writer, and his collected works of all kinds now fill eleven volumes, exclusive of his letters. In 1857 he was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and there began his career as a lecturer; and this method of public expression he employed often. His life was thus one with many diverse activities, and filled with practical or literary affairs; and on no side was it deficient in human relations. He won respect and reputation while he lived; and his works continue to attract men's minds, although with much unevenness. He died at Liverpool, on April 15th, 1888.

That considerable portion of Arnold's writings which was concerned with education and politics, or with phases of theological thought and religious tendency, however valuable in contemporary

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

discussion, and to men and movements of the third quarter of the century, must be set on one side. It is not because of anything there contained that he has become a permanent figure of his time, or is of interest in literature. He achieved distinction as a critic and as a poet; but although he was earlier in the field as a poet, he was recognized by the public at large first as a critic. The union of the two functions is not unusual in the history of literature; but where success has been attained in both, the critic has commonly sprung from the poet in the man, and his range and quality have been limited thereby. It was so with Dryden and Wordsworth, and, less obviously, with Landor and Lowell. In Arnold's case there is no such growth: the two modes of writing, prose and verse, were disconnected. One could read his essays without suspecting a poet, and his poems without discerning a critic, except so far as one finds the moralist there. In fact, Arnold's critical faculty belonged rather to the practical side of his life, and was a part of his talents as a public man.

This appears by the very definitions that he gave, and by the turn of his phrase, which always keeps an audience rather than a meditative reader in view. «What is the function of criticism at the present time?» he asks, and answers—«A disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.» That is a wide warrant. The writer who exercises his critical function under it, however, is plainly a reformer at heart, and labors for the social welfare. He is not an analyst of the form of art for its own sake, or a contemplator of its substance of wisdom or beauty merely. He is not limited to literature or the other arts of expression, but the world—the intellectual world—is all before him where to choose; and having learned the best that is known and thought, his second and manifestly not inferior duty is to go into all nations, a messenger of the propaganda of intelligence. It is a great mission, and nobly characterized; but if criticism be so defined, it is criticism of a large mold.

The scope of the word conspicuously appears also in the phrase, which became proverbial, declaring that literature is «a criticism of life.» In such an employment of terms, ordinary meanings evaporate; and it becomes necessary to know the thought of the author rather than the usage of men. Without granting the dictum, therefore, which would be far from the purpose, is it not clear that by «critic» and «criticism» Arnold intended to designate, or at least to convey, something peculiar to his own conception,—not strictly related to literature at all, it may be, but more closely tied to society in its general mental activity? In other words, Arnold was a critic of civilization more than of books, and aimed at illumination by means of ideas. With this goes his manner, — that habitual air of telling you something which you did not know before, and doing it for your good, — which stamps him as a preacher born. Under the mask of the critic is the long English face of the gospeler; that type whose persistent physiognomy was never absent from the conventicle of English thought.

This evangelizing prepossession of Arnold's mind must be recognized in order to understand alike his attitude of superiority, his stiffly didactic method, and his success in attracting converts in whom the seed proved barren. The first impression that his entire work makes is one of limitation; so strict is this limitation, and it profits him so much, that it seems the element in which he had his being. On a close survey, the fewness of his ideas is most surprising, though the fact is somewhat cloaked by the lucidity of his thought, its logical vigor, and the manner of its presentation. He takes a text, either some formula of his own or some adopted phrase that he has made his own, and from that he starts out only to return to it again and again with ceaseless iteration. In his illustrations, for example, when he has pilloried some poor gentleman, otherwise unknown, for the astounded and amused contemplation of the Anglican monocle, he cannot let him alone. So too when, with the journalist's nack for nicknames, he divides all England into three parts, he cannot forget the rhetorical exploit. He never lets the points he has made fall into oblivion; and hence his work in general, as a critic, is skeletonized to the memory in watchwords, formulas, and nicknames, which, taken altogether, make up only a small number of ideas.

His scale, likewise, is meagre. His essay is apt to be a book review or a plea merely; it is without that free illusiveness and undeveloped suggestion which indicate a full mind and give to such brief pieces of writing the sense of overflow. He takes no large subject as a whole, but either a small one or else some phases of the larger one; and he exhausts all that he touches. He seems to have no more to say. It is probable that his acquaintance with literature was incommensurate with his reputation or apparent scope as a writer. As he has fewer ideas than any other author of his time of the same rank, so he discloses less knowledge of his own or foreign literatures. His occupations forbade wide acquisition; he husbanded his time, and economized also by giving the best direction to his private studies, and he accomplished much; but he could not master the field as any man whose profession was literature might easily do. Consequently, in comparison with Coleridge or Lowell, his critical work seems dry and bare, with neither the fluency nor the richness of a master.

In yet another point this paucity of matter appears. What Mr. Richard Holt Hutton says in his essay on the poetry of Arnold is so apposite here that it will be best to quote the passage. He is speaking, in an aside, of Arnold's criticisms:—

> «They are fine, they are keen, they are often true; but they are always too much limited to the thin superficial layer of the moral nature of their subjects, and seem to take little comparative interest in the deeper individuality beneath. Read his essay on Heine, and you will see the critic engrossed with the relation of Heine to the political and social ideas of his day, and passing over with comparative indifference the true soul of Heine, the fountain of both his poetry and his cynicism. Read his five lectures on translating Homer, and observe how exclusively the critic's mind is occupied with the form as distinguished from the substance of the Homeric poetry. Even when he concerns himself with the greatest modern poets,—with Shakespeare as in the preface to the earlier edition of his poems, or with Goethe in reiterated poetical criticisms, or when he again and again in his poems treats of Wordsworth,—it is always the style and superficial doctrine of their poetry, not the individual character and unique genius, which occupy him. He will tell you whether a poet is ‹sane and clear,› or stormy and fervent; whether he is rapid and noble, or loquacious and quaint; whether a thinker penetrates the husks of conventional thought which mislead the crowd; whether there is sweetness as well as lucidity in his aims; whether a descriptive writer has ‹distinction› of style, or is admirable only for his vivacity: but he rarely goes to the individual heart of any of the subjects of his criticism; he finds their style and class, but not their personality in that class; he *ranks* his men, but does not portray them; hardly even seems to find much interest in the *individual* roots of their character.»

In brief, this is to say that Arnold took little interest in human nature; nor is there anything in his later essays on Byron, Keats, Wordsworth, Milton, or Gray, to cause us to revise the judgment on this point. In fact, so far as he touched on the personality of Keats or Gray, to take the capital instances, he was most unsatisfactory.

Arnold was not, then, one of those critics who are interested in life itself, and through the literary work seize on the soul of the author in its original brightness, or set forth the life-stains in the successive incarnations of his heart and mind. Nor was he of those who consider the work itself final, and endeavor simply to understand it,—form and matter,—and so to mediate between genius and our slower intelligence. He followed neither the psychological nor the æsthetic method. It need hardly be said that he was born too early to be able ever to conceive of literature as a phenomenon of society, and its great men as only terms in an evolutionary series. He had only a moderate knowledge of literature, and his stock of ideas was small; his manner of speech was hard and dry, there was a trick in his style, and his self-repetition is tiresome.

What gave him vogue, then, and what still keeps his more literary work alive? Is it anything more than the temper in which he worked, and the spirit which he evoked in the reader? He stood for the very spirit of intelligence in his time. He made his readers respect ideas, and want to have as many as possible. He enveloped them in an atmosphere of mental curiosity and alertness, and put them in contact with novel and attractive themes. In particular, he took their minds to the Continent and made them feel that they were becoming cosmopolitan by knowing Joubert; or at home, he rallied them in opposition to the dullness of the period, to «barbarism» or other objectionable traits in the social classes: and he volleyed contempt upon the common multitudinous foe in general, and from time to time cheered them with some delectable examples of single combat. It cannot be concealed that there was much malicious pleasure in it all. He was not indisposed to high-bred cruelty. Like Lamb, he «loved a fool,» but it was in a mortar; and pleasant it was to see the spectacle when he really took a man in hand for the chastisement of irony. It is thus that «the *seraphim illuminati* sneer.» And in all his controversial writing there was a brilliancy and unsparingness that will appeal to the deepest instincts of a fighting race, willy-nilly; and as one had only to read the words to feel himself among the children of light, so that our withers were unwrung, there was high enjoyment.

This liveliness of intellectual conflict, together with the sense of ideas, was a boon to youth especially; and the academic air in which the thought and style always moved, with scholarly self-possession and assurance, with the dogmatism of «enlightenment» in all ages and among all sects, with serenity and security unassailable, from within at least — this academic «clearness and purity without shadow or stain» had an overpowering charm to the college-bred and cultivated, who found the rare combination of information, taste, and aggressiveness in one of their own ilk. Above all, there was the play of intelligence on every page; there was an application of ideas to life in many regions of the world's interests; there was contact with a mind keen, clear, and firm, armed for controversy or persuasion equally, and filled with eager belief in itself, its ways, and its will.

To meet such personality in a book was a bracing experience; and for many these essays were an awakening of the mind itself. We may go to others for the greater part of what criticism can give, — for definite and fundamental principles, for adequate characterization, for the intuition and the revelation, the penetrant flash of thought and phrase: but Arnold generates and supports a temper of mind in which the work of these writers best thrives even in its own sphere; and through him this temper becomes less individual than social, encompassing the whole of life. Few critics have been really less «disinterested,» few have kept their eyes less steadily «upon the object»: but that fact does not lessen the value of his precepts of disinterestedness and objectivity; nor is it necessary, in becoming «a child of light,» to join in spirit the unhappy «remnant» of the academy, or to drink too deep of that honeyed satisfaction, with which he fills his readers, of being on his side. As a critic, Arnold succeeds if his main purpose does not fail, and that was to reinforce the party of ideas, of culture, of the children of light; to impart, not moral vigor, but openness and reasonableness of mind; and to arouse and arm the intellectual in contradistinction to the other energies of civilization.

The poetry of Arnold, to pass to the second portion of his work, was less widely welcomed than his prose, and made its way very slowly; but it now seems the most important and permanent part. It is not small in quantity, though his unproductiveness in later years has made it appear that he was less fluent and abundant in verse than he really was. The remarkable thing, as one turns to his poems, is the contrast in spirit that they afford to the essays: there is here an atmosphere of entire calm. We seem to be in a different world. This fact, with the singular silence of his familiar letters in regard to his verse, indicates that his poetic life was truly a thing apart.

In one respect only is there something in common between his prose and verse: just as interest in human nature was absent in the latter, it is absent also in the former. There is no action in the poems; neither is there character for its own sake. Arnold was a man of the mind, and he betrays no interest in personality except for its intellectual traits; in Clough as in Obermann, it is the life of thought, not the human being, that he portrays. As a poet, he expresses the moods of the meditative spirit in view of nature and our mortal existence; and he represents life, not lyrically by its changeful moments, nor tragically by its conflict in great characters, but philosophically by a self-contained and unvarying monologue, deeper or less deep in feeling and with cadences of tone, but always with the same grave and serious effect. He is constantly thinking, whatever his subject or his mood; his attitude is intellectual, his sentiments are maxims, his conclusions are advisory. His world is the sphere of thought, and his poems have the distance and repose and also the coldness that befit that sphere; and the character of his imagination, which lays hold of form and reason, makes natural to him the classical style.

It is obvious that the sources of his poetical culture are Greek. It is not merely, however, that he takes for his early subjects Merope and Empedocles, or that he strives in 'Balder Dead' for Homeric narrative, or that in the recitative to which he was addicted he evoked an immelodious phantom of Greek choruses; nor is it the «marmoreal air» that chills while it ennobles much of his finest work. One feels the Greek quality not as a source but as a presence. In Tennyson, Keats, and Shelley, there was Greek influence, but in them the result was modern. In Arnold the antiquity remains; remains in mood, just as in Landor it remains in form. The Greek twilight broods over all his poetry. It is pagan in philosophic spirit; not Attic, but of a later and stoical time, with the very virtues of patience, endurance, suffering, not in their Christian types, but as they now seem to a post-Christian imagination looking back to the imperial past. There is a difference, it is true, in Arnold's expression of the mood: he is as little Sophoclean as he is Homeric, as little Lucretian as he is Vergilian. The temperament is not the same, not a survival or a revival of the antique, but original and living. And yet the mood of the verse is felt at once to be a reincarnation of the deathless spirit of Hellas, that in other ages also has made beautiful and solemn for a time the shadowed places of the Christian world. If one does not realize this, he must miss the secret of the tranquillity, the chill, the grave austerity, as well as the philosophical resignation, which are essential to the verse. Even in those parts of the poems which use romantic motives, one reason of their original charm is that they suggest how the Greek imagination would have dealt with the forsaken merman, the church of Brou, and Tristram and Iseult. The presence of such motives, such mythology, and such Christian and chivalric color in the work of Arnold does not disturb the simple unity of its feeling, which finds no solvent for life, whatever its accident of time and place and faith, except in that Greek spirit which ruled in thoughtful men before the triumph of Christianity, and is still native in men who accept the intellect as the sole guide of life.

It was with reference to these modern men and the movement they took part in, that he made his serious claim to greatness; to rank, that is, with Tennyson and Browning, as he said, in the literature of his time. «My poems,» he wrote, «represent on the whole the main movement of mind of the last quarter of a century; and thus they will probably have their day as people become conscious to themselves of what that movement of mind is, and interested in the literary productions that reflect it. It might be fairly urged that I have less poetical sentiment than Tennyson, and less intellectual vigor and abundance than Browning; yet because I have, perhaps, more of a fusion of the two than either of them, and have more regularly applied that fusion to the main line of modern development, I am likely enough to have my turn, as they have had theirs.» If the main movement had been such as he thought of it, or if it had been of importance in the long run, there might be a sounder basis for this hope than now appears to be the case; but there can be no doubt, let the contemporary movement have been what it may, that Arnold's mood is one that will not pass out of men's hearts to-day nor to-morrow.

On the modern side the example of Wordsworth was most formative, and in fact it is common to describe Arnold as a Wordsworthian. and so, in his contemplative attitude to nature, and in his habitual recourse to her, he was; but both nature herself as she appeared to him, and his mood in her presence, were very different from Wordsworth's conception and emotion. Arnold finds in nature a refuge from life, an anodyne, an escape; but Wordsworth, in going into the hills for poetical communion, passed from a less to a fuller and deeper life, and obtained an inspiration, and was seeking the goal of all his being. In the method of approach, too, as well as in the character of the experience, there was a profound difference between the two poets. Arnold sees with the outward rather than the inward eye. He is pictorial in a way that Wordsworth seldom is; he uses detail much more, and gives a group or a scene with the externality of a painter. The method resembles that of Tennyson rather than that of Wordsworth, and has more direct analogy with the Greek manner than with the modern and emotional schools; it is objective, often minute, and always carefully composed, in the artistic sense of that term. The description of the river Oxus, for example, though faintly charged with suggested and allegoric meaning, is a noble close to the poem which ends in it. The scale is large, and Arnold was fond of a broad landscape, of mountains, and prospects over the land; but one cannot fancy Wordsworth writing it. So too, on a small scale, the charming scene of the English garden in ‘Thyrsis’ is far from Wordsworth's manner:—

> «When garden walks and all the grassy floor
> With blossoms red and white of fallen May
> And chestnut-flowers are strewn—
> So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,
> From the wet field, through the vext garden trees,
> Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze.»

This is a picture that could be framed: how different from Wordsworth's «wandering voice»! Or to take another notable example, which, like the Oxus passage, is a fine close in the ‘Tristram and Iseult,’—the hunter on the arras above the dead lovers:—

«A stately huntsman, clad in green,
And round him a fresh forest scene.
On that clear forest-knoll he stays,
With his pack round him, and delays.

. . . . . .

The wild boar rustles in his lair,
The fierce hounds snuff the tainted air,
But lord and hounds keep rooted there.
Cheer, cheer thy dogs into the brake,
O hunter! and without a fear
Thy golden tasseled bugle blow—»

But no one is deceived, and the hunter does not move from the arras, but is still «rooted there,» with his green suit and his golden tassel. The piece is pictorial, and highly wrought for pictorial effects only, obviously decorative and used as stage scenery precisely in the manner of our later theatrical art, with that accent of forethought which turns the beautiful into the æsthetic. This is a method which Wordsworth never used. Take one of his pictures, the ‹Reaper› for example, and see the difference. The one is out-of-doors, the other is of the studio. The purpose of these illustrations is to show that Arnold's nature-pictures are not only consciously artistic, with an arrangement that approaches artifice, but that he is interested through his eye primarily and not through his emotions. It is characteristic of his temperament also that he reminds one most often of the painter in water-colors.

If there is this difference between Arnold and Wordsworth in method, a greater difference in spirit is to be anticipated. It is a fixed gulf. In nature Wordsworth found the one spirit's «plastic stress,» and a near and intimate revelation to the soul of truths that were his greatest joy and support in existence. Arnold finds there no inhabitancy of God, no such streaming forth of wisdom and beauty from the fountain heads of being; but the secret frame of nature is filled only with the darkness, the melancholy, the waiting endurance that is projected from himself:—

«Yet, Fausta, the mute turf we tread,
The solemn hills about us spread,
The stream that falls incessantly,
The strange-scrawled rocks, the lonely sky,
If I might lend their life a voice,
Seem to bear rather than rejoice.»

Compare this with Wordsworth's ‹Stanzas on Peele Castle,› and the important reservations that must be borne in mind in describing Arnold as a Wordsworthian will become clearer. It is as a relief from thought, as a beautiful and half-physical diversion, as a scale of being so vast and mysterious as to reduce the pettiness of human life to nothingness,—it is in these ways that nature has value in Arnold's verse. Such a poet may describe natural scenes well, and obtain by means of them contrast to human conditions, and decorative beauty; but he does not penetrate nature or interpret what her significance is in the human spirit, as the more emotional poets have done. He ends in an antithesis, not in a synthesis, and both nature and man lose by the divorce. One looks in vain for anything deeper than landscapes in Arnold's treatment of nature; she is emptied of her own infinite, and has become spiritually void: and in the simple great line in which he gave the sea—

«The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea—»

he is thinking of man, not of the ocean: and the mood seems ancient rather than modern, the feeling of a Greek, just as the sound of the waves to him is always Ægean.

In treating of man's life, which must be the main thing in any poet's work, Arnold is either very austere or very pessimistic. If the feeling is moral, the predominant impression is of austerity; if it is intellectual, the predominant impression is of sadness. He was not insensible to the charm of life, but he feels it in his senses only to deny it in his mind. The illustrative passage is from ‹Dover Beach›:—

«Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain.»

This is the contradiction of sense and thought, the voice of a regret grounded in the intellect (for if it were vital and grounded in the emotions it would become despair); the creed of illusion and futility in life, which is the characteristic note of Arnold, and the reason of his acceptance by many minds. The one thing about life which he most insists on is its isolation, its individuality. In the series called ‹Switzerland,› this is the substance of the whole; and the doctrine is stated with an intensity and power, with an amplitude and prolongation, that set these poems apart as the most remarkable of all his lyrics. From a poet so deeply impressed with this aspect of existence, and unable to find its remedy or its counterpart in the harmony of life, no joyful or hopeful word can be expected, and none is found. The second thing about life which he dwells on is its futility; though he bids one strive and work, and points to the example of the strong whom he has known, yet one feels that his voice rings more true when he writes of Obermann than in any other of the elegiac poems. In such verse as the ‘Summer Night,’ again, the genuineness of the mood is indubitable. In ‘The Sick King of Bokhara,’ the one dramatic expression of his genius, futility is the very centre of the action. The fact that so much of his poetry seems to take its motive from the subsidence of Christian faith has set him among the skeptic or agnostic poets, and the «main movement» which he believed he had expressed was doubtless that in which agnosticism was a leading element. The unbelief of the third quarter of the century was certainly a controlling influence over him, and in a man mainly intellectual by nature it could not well have been otherwise.

Hence, as one looks at his more philosophical and lyrical poems — the profounder part of his work — and endeavors to determine their character and sources alike, it is plain to see that in the old phrase, «the pride of the intellect» lifts its lonely column over the desolation of every page. The man of the academy is here, as in the prose, after all. He reveals himself in the literary motive, the bookish atmosphere of the verse, in its vocabulary, its elegance of structure, its precise phrase and its curious allusions (involving footnotes), and in fact, throughout all its form and structure. So self-conscious is it that it becomes frankly prosaic at inconvenient times, and is more often on the level of eloquent and graceful rhetoric than of poetry. It is frequently liquid and melodious, but there is no burst of native song in it anywhere. It is the work of a true poet, nevertheless; but there are many voices for the Muse. It is sincere, it is touched with reality; it is the mirror of a phase of life in our times, and not in our times only, but whenever the intellect seeks expression for its sense of the limitation of its own career, and its sadness in a world which it cannot solve.

A word should be added concerning the personality of Arnold which is revealed in his familiar letters,— a collection that has dignified the records of literature with a singularly noble memory of private life. Few who did not know Arnold could have been prepared for the revelation of a nature so true, so amiable, so dutiful. In every relation of private life he is shown to have been a man of exceptional constancy and plainness. The letters are mainly home letters; but a few friendships also yielded up their hoard, and thus the circle of private life is made complete. Every one must take delight in the mental association with Arnold in the scenes of his existence, thus daily exposed, and in his family affections. A nature warm to its own, kindly to all, cheerful, fond of sport and fun, and always fed from pure fountains, and with it a character so founded upon the rock, so humbly serviceable, so continuing in power and grace, must wake in all the responses of happy appreciation, and leave the charm of memory.

He did his duty as naturally as if it required neither resolve, nor effort, nor thought of any kind for the morrow, and he never failed, seemingly, in act or word of sympathy, in little or great things; and when, to this, one adds the clear ether of the intellectual life where he habitually moved in his own life apart, and the humanity of his home, the gift that these letters bring may be appreciated. That gift is the man himself; but set in the atmosphere of home, with sonship and fatherhood, sisters and brothers, with the bereavements of years fully accomplished, and those of babyhood and boyhood,—a sweet and wholesome English home, with all the cloud and sunshine of the English world drifting over its roof-tree, and the soil of England beneath its stones, and English duties for the breath of its being. To add such a home to the household-rights of English literature is perhaps something from which Arnold would have shrunk, but it endears his memory.

George E. Woodberry

INTELLIGENCE AND GENIUS

From ‹Essays in Criticism›

WHAT are the essential characteristics of the spirit of our nation? Not, certainly, an open and clear mind, not a quick and flexible intelligence. Our greatest admirers would not claim for us that we have these in a pre-eminent degree; they might say that we had more of them than our detractors gave us credit for, but they would not assert them to be our essential characteristics. They would rather allege, as our chief spiritual characteristics, energy and honesty; and if we are judged favorably and positively, not invidiously and negatively, our chief characteristics are no doubt these: energy and honesty, not an open and clear mind, not a quick and flexible intelligence. Openness of mind and flexibility of intelligence were very signal characteristics of the Athenian people in ancient times; everybody will feel that. Openness of mind and flexibility of intelligence are remarkable characteristics of the French people in modern times,— at any rate, they strikingly characterize them as compared with us; I think everybody, or almost everybody, will feel that. I will not now ask what more the Athenian or the French spirit has than this, nor what shortcomings either of them may have as a set-off against this; all I want now to point out is that they have this, and that we have it in a much lesser degree.

Let me remark, however, that not only in the moral sphere, but also in the intellectual and spiritual sphere, energy and honesty are most important and fruitful qualities; that for instance, of what we call genius, energy is the most essential part. So, by assigning to a nation energy and honesty as its chief spiritual characteristics,— by refusing to it, as at all eminent characteristics, openness of mind and flexibility of intelligence,— we do not by any means, as some people might at first suppose, relegate its importance and its power of manifesting itself with effect from the intellectual to the moral sphere. We only indicate its probable special line of successful activity in the intellectual sphere, and, it is true, certain imperfections and failings to which in this sphere it will always be subject. Genius is mainly an affair of energy, and poetry is mainly an affair of genius; therefore a nation whose spirit is characterized by energy may well be eminent in poetry;— and we have Shakespeare. Again, the highest reach of science is, one may say, an inventive power, a faculty of divination, akin to the highest power exercised in poetry; therefore a nation whose spirit is characterized by energy may well be eminent in science;— and we have Newton. Shakespeare and Newton: in the intellectual sphere there can be no higher names. And what that energy, which is the life of genius, above everything demands and insists upon, is freedom; entire independence of all authority, prescription, and routine,— the fullest room to expand as it will. Therefore a nation whose chief spiritual characteristic is energy will not be very apt to set up, in intellectual matters, a fixed standard, an authority, like an academy. By this it certainly escapes certain real inconveniences and dangers; and it can at the same time, as we have seen, reach undeniably splendid heights in poetry and science.

On the other hand, some of the requisites of intellectual work are specially the affair of quickness of mind and flexibility of intelligence. The form, the method of evolution, the precision, the proportions, the relations of the parts to the whole, in an intellectual work, depend mainly upon them. And these are the elements of an intellectual work which are really most communicable from it, which can most be learned and adopted from it, which have therefore the greatest effect upon the intellectual performance of others. Even in poetry these requisites are very important; and the poetry of a nation not eminent for the gifts on which they depend, will more or less suffer by this shortcoming. In poetry, however, they are after all secondary, and energy is the first thing; but in prose they are of first-rate importance. In its prose literature, therefore, and in the routine of intellectual work generally, a nation with no particular gifts for these will not be so successful. These are what, as I have said, can to a certain degree be learned and appropriated, while the free activity of genius cannot. Academies consecrate and maintain them, and therefore a nation with an eminent turn for them naturally establishes academies. So far as routine and authority tend to embarrass energy and inventive genius, academies may be said to be obstructive to energy and inventive genius, and to this extent to the human spirit's general advance. But then this evil is so much compensated by the propagation, on a large scale, of the mental aptitudes and demands which an open mind and a flexible intelligence naturally engender, genius itself in the long run so greatly finds its account in this propagation, and bodies like the French Academy have such power for promoting it, that the general advance of the human spirit is perhaps, on the whole, rather furthered than impeded by their existence.

How much greater is our nation in poetry than prose! how much better, in general, do the productions of its spirit show in the qualities of genius than in the qualities of intelligence! One may constantly remark this in the work of individuals: how much more striking, in general, does any Englishman — of some vigor of mind, but by no means a poet — seem in his verse than in his prose! His verse partly suffers from his not being really a poet, partly no doubt from the very same defects which impair his prose, and he cannot express himself with thorough success in it, but how much more powerful a personage does he appear in it, by dint of feeling and of originality and movement of ideas, than when he is writing prose! With a Frenchman of like stamp, it is just the reverse: set him to write poetry, he is limited, artificial, and impotent; set him to write prose, he is free, natural, and effective. The power of French literature is in its prose writers, the power of English literature is in its poets. Nay, many of the celebrated French poets depend wholly for their fame upon the qualities of intelligence which they exhibit,—qualities which are the distinctive support of prose; many of the celebrated English prose writers depend wholly for their fame upon the qualities of genius and imagination which they exhibit,—qualities which are the distinctive support of poetry.

But as I have said, the qualities of genius are less transferable than the qualities of intelligence; less can be immediately learned and appropriated from their product; they are less direct and stringent intellectual agencies, though they may be more beautiful and divine. Shakespeare and our great Elizabethan group were certainly more gifted writers than Corneille and his group; but what was the sequel to this great literature, this literature of genius, as we may call it, stretching from Marlowe to Milton? What did it lead up to in English literature? To our provincial and second-rate literature of the eighteenth century. What, on the other hand, was the sequel to the literature of the French «great century,» to this literature of intelligence, as by comparison with our Elizabethan literature we may call it; what did it lead up to? To the French literature of the eighteenth century, one of the most powerful and pervasive intellectual agencies that have ever existed,—the greatest European force of the eighteenth century. In science, again, we had Newton, a genius of the very highest order, a type of genius in science if ever there was one. On the continent, as a sort of counterpart to Newton, there was Leibnitz; a man, it seems to me (though on these matters I speak under correction), of much less creative energy of genius, much less power of divination than Newton, but rather a man of admirable intelligence, a type of intelligence in science if ever there was one. Well, and what did they each directly lead up to in science? What was the intellectual generation that sprang from each of them? I only repeat what the men of science have themselves pointed out. The man of genius was continued by the English analysts of the eighteenth century, comparatively powerless and obscure followers of the renowned master. The man of intelligence was continued by successors like Bernoulli, Euler, Lagrange, and Laplace, the greatest names in modern mathematics.

SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

From ‹Culture and Anarchy›

THE disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity; sometimes, indeed, they make its motive mere exclusiveness and vanity. The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued either out of sheer vanity and ignorance, or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people who have not got it. No serious man would call this *culture*, or attach any value to it, as culture, at all. To find the real ground for the very differing estimate which serious people will set upon culture, we must find some motive for culture in the terms of which may lie a real ambiguity; and such a motive the word *curiosity* gives us.

I have before now pointed out that we English do not, like the foreigners, use this word in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. With us the word is always used in a somewhat disapproving sense. A liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind may be meant by a foreigner when he speaks of curiosity; but with us the word always conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unedifying activity. In the Quarterly Review, some little time ago, was an estimate of the celebrated French critic, M. Sainte-Beuve; and a very inadequate estimate it in my judgment was. And its inadequacy consisted chiefly in this: that in our English way it left out of sight the double sense really involved in the word *curiosity*, thinking enough was said to stamp M. Sainte-Beuve with blame if it was said that he was impelled in his operations as a critic by curiosity, and omitting either to perceive that M. Sainte-Beuve himself, and many other people with him, would consider that this was praiseworthy and not blameworthy, or to point out why it ought really to be accounted worthy of blame and not of praise. For as there is a curiosity about intellectual matters which is futile, and merely a disease, so there is certainly a curiosity — a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are — which is, in an intelligent being, natural and laudable. Nay, and the very desire to see things as they are implies a balance and regulation of mind which is not often attained without fruitful effort, and which is the very opposite of the blind and diseased impulse of mind which is what we mean to blame when we blame curiosity. Montesquieu says:—"The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the desire to augment the excellence of our nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent." This is the true ground to assign for the genuine scientific passion, however manifested, and for culture, viewed simply as a fruit of this passion; and it is a worthy ground, even though we let the term *curiosity* stand to describe it.

But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbor, the impulses toward action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it,—motives eminently such as are called social,—come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and pre-eminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is *a study of perfection.* It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good. As in the first view of it we took for its worthy motto Montesquieu's words, "To render an intelligent being yet more intelligent!" so in the second view of it there is no better motto which it can have than these words of Bishop Wilson: "To make reason and the will of God prevail."

Only, whereas the passion for doing good is apt to be overhasty in determining what reason and the will of God say, because its turn is for acting rather than thinking, and it wants to be beginning to act; and whereas it is apt to take its own conceptions, which proceed from its own state of development and share in all the imperfections and immaturities of this, for a basis of action: what distinguishes culture is, that it is possessed by the scientific passion as well as by the passion of doing good; that it demands worthy notions of reason and the will of God, and does not readily suffer its own crude conceptions to substitute themselves for them. And knowing that no action or institution can be salutary and stable which is not based on reason and the will of God, it is not so bent on acting and instituting, even with the great aim of diminishing human error and misery ever before its thoughts, but that it can remember that acting and instituting are of little use, unless we know how and what we ought to act and to institute. . . .

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to make reason and the will of God prevail. He who works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater!—the passion for making them *prevail*. It is not satisfied till we *all* come to a perfect man; it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a *national* glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. Only it must be *real* thought and *real* beauty; *real* sweetness and *real* light. Plenty of people will try to give the masses, as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses. The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organizations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way; but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely,—nourished and not bound by them.

This is the *social idea;* and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have labored to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light. Such a man was Abélard in the Middle Ages, in spite of all his imperfections; and thence the boundless emotion and enthusiasm which Abélard excited. Such were Lessing and Herder in Germany, at the end of the last century; and their services to Germany were in this way inestimably precious. Generations will pass, and literary monuments will accumulate, and works far more perfect than the works of Lessing and Herder will be produced in Germany; and yet the names of these two men will fill a German with a reverence and enthusiasm such as the names of the most gifted masters will hardly awaken. And why? Because they *humanized* knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail. With Saint Augustine they said:—"Let us not leave thee alone to make in the secret of thy knowledge, as thou didst before the creation of the firmament, the division of light from darkness; let the children of thy spirit, placed in their firmament, make their light shine upon the earth, mark the division of night and day, and announce the revolution of the times; for the old order is passed, and the new arises; the night is spent, the day is come forth; and thou shalt crown the year with thy blessing, when thou shalt send forth laborers into thy harvest sown by other hands than theirs; when thou shalt send forth new laborers to new seed-times, whereof the harvest shall be not yet."

Keeping this in view, I have in my own mind often indulged myself with the fancy of employing, in order to designate our aristocratic class, the name of *The Barbarians.* The Barbarians, to whom we all owe so much, and who reinvigorated and renewed our worn-out Europe, had, as is well known, eminent merits; and in this country, where we are for the most part sprung from the Barbarians, we have never had the prejudice against them which prevails among the races of Latin origin. The Barbarians brought with them that stanch individualism, as the modern phrase is, and that passion for doing as one likes, for the assertion of personal liberty, which appears to Mr. Bright the central idea of English life, and of which we have at any rate a very rich supply. The stronghold and natural seat of this passion was in the nobles of whom our aristocratic class are the inheritors; and this class, accordingly, have signally manifested it, and have done much by their example to recommend it to the body of the nation, who already, indeed, had it in their blood. The Barbarians, again, had the passion for field-sports; and they have handed it on to our aristocratic class, who of this passion, too, as of the passion for asserting one's personal liberty, are the great natural stronghold. The care of the Barbarians for the body, and for all manly exercises; the vigor, good looks, and fine complexion which they acquired and perpetuated in their families by these means,—all this may be observed still in our aristocratic class. The chivalry of the Barbarians, with its characteristics of high spirit, choice manners, and distinguished bearing,—what is this but the attractive commencement of the politeness of our aristocratic class? In some Barbarian noble, no doubt, one would have admired, if one could have been then alive to see it, the rudiments of our politest peer. Only, all this culture (to call it by that name) of the Barbarians was an exterior culture mainly. It consisted principally in outward gifts and graces, in looks, manners, accomplishments, prowess. The chief inward gifts which had part in it were the most exterior, so to speak, of inward gifts, those which come nearest to outward ones; they were courage, a high spirit, self-confidence. Far within, and unawakened, lay a whole range of powers of thought and feeling, to which these interesting productions of nature had, from the circumstances of their life, no access. Making allowances for the difference of the times, surely we can observe precisely the same thing now in our aristocratic class. In general its culture is exterior chiefly; all the exterior graces and accomplishments, and the more external of the inward virtues, seem to be principally its portion. It now, of course, cannot but be often in contact with those studies by which, from the world of thought and feeling, true culture teaches us to fetch sweetness and light; but its hold upon these very studies appears remarkably external, and unable to exert any deep power upon its spirit. Therefore the one insufficiency which we noted in the perfect mean of this class was an insufficiency of light. And owing to the same causes, does not a subtle criticism lead us to make, even on the good looks and politeness of our aristocratic class, and of even the most fascinating half of that class, the feminine half, the one qualifying remark, that in these charming gifts there should perhaps be, for ideal perfection, a shade more *soul?*

I often, therefore, when I want to distinguish clearly the aristocratic class from the Philistines proper, or middle class, name the former, in my own mind, *The Barbarians.* And when I go through the country, and see this and that beautiful and imposing seat of theirs crowning the landscape, «There,» I say to myself, «is a great fortified post of the Barbarians.»

OXFORD

From ‹Essays in Criticism›

No, we are all seekers still! seekers often make mistakes, and I wish mine to redound to my own discredit only, and not to touch Oxford. Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!

> «There are our young barbarians all at play!»

And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection, — to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side? — nearer, perhaps, than all the science of Tübingen. Adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic! who hast given thyself so prodigally, given thyself to sides and to heroes not mine, only never to the Philistines! home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties! what example could ever so inspire us to keep down the Philistine in ourselves, what teacher could ever so save us from that bondage to which we are all prone, that bondage which Goethe, in his incomparable lines on the death of Schiller, makes it his friend's highest praise (and nobly did Schiller deserve the praise) to have left miles out of sight behind him: the bondage of «*was uns alle bandigt, Das Gemeine!*» She will forgive me, even if I have unwittingly drawn upon her a shot or two aimed at her unworthy son; for she is generous, and the cause in which I fight is, after all, hers. Apparitions of a day, what is our puny warfare against the Philistines, compared with the warfare which this queen of romance has been waging against them for centuries, and will wage after we are gone?

TO A FRIEND

WHO prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind?—
He much, the old man, who, clearest-souled of men,
Saw The Wide Prospect, and the Asian Fen,
And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay, though blind.
Much he, whose friendship I not long since won,
That halting slave, who in Nicopolis
Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal son
Cleared Rome of what most shamed him. But be his
My special thanks, whose even-balanced soul,
From first youth tested up to extreme old age,
Business could not make dull, nor passion wild;
Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole;
The mellow glory of the Attic stage,
Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child.

YOUTH AND CALM

'TIS death! and peace, indeed, is here,
And ease from shame, and rest from fear.
There's nothing can dismarble now
The smoothness of that limpid brow.
But is a calm like this, in truth,
The crowning end of life and youth,
And when this boon rewards the dead,
Are all debts paid, has all been said?
And is the heart of youth so light,
Its step so firm, its eye so bright,
Because on its hot brow there blows
A wind of promise and repose
From the far grave, to which it goes;

Because it has the hope to come,
One day, to harbor in the tomb?
Ah no, the bliss youth dreams is one
For daylight, for the cheerful sun,
For feeling nerves and living breath—
Youth dreams a bliss on this side death.
It dreams a rest, if not more deep,
More grateful than this marble sleep;
It hears a voice within it tell:
Calm's not life's crown, though calm is well.
'Tis all perhaps which man acquires,
But 'tis not what our youth desires.

ISOLATION

TO MARGUERITE

We were apart; yet, day by day,
I bade my heart more constant be.
I bade it keep the world away,
And grow a home for only thee;
Nor feared but thy love likewise grew,
Like mine, each day, more tried, more true.

The fault was grave! I might have known,
What far too soon, alas! I learned—
The heart can bind itself alone,
And faith may oft be unreturned.
Self-swayed our feelings ebb and swell—
Thou lov'st no more;—Farewell! Farewell!

Farewell!—and thou, thou lonely heart,
Which never yet without remorse
Even for a moment didst depart
From thy remote and spherèd course
To haunt the place where passions reign—
Back to thy solitude again!

Back! with the conscious thrill of shame
Which Luna felt, that summer-night,
Flash through her pure immortal frame,
When she forsook the starry height
To hang over Endymion's sleep
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved
How vain a thing is mortal love,

Wandering in Heaven, far removed;
But thou hast long had place to prove
This truth — to prove, and make thine own:
"Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone."

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
Which touch thee are unmating things —
Ocean and clouds and night and day;
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs;
And life, and others' joy and pain,
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men — for they, at least,
Have dreamed two human hearts might blend
In one, and were through faith released
From isolation without end
Prolonged; nor knew, although not less
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live alone.
The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollow lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour —

Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain —
Oh, might our marges meet again!

Who ordered that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire? —
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea

STANZAS IN MEMORY OF THE AUTHOR OF 'OBERMANN' (1849)

In front the awful Alpine track
Crawls up its rocky stair;
The autumn storm-winds drive the rack,
Close o'er it, in the air.

Behind are the abandoned baths
Mute in their meadows lone;
The leaves are on the valley-paths,
The mists are on the Rhone—

The white mists rolling like a sea!
I hear the torrents roar.
—Yes, Obermann, all speaks of thee;
I feel thee near once more.

I turn thy leaves! I feel their breath
Once more upon me roll;
That air of languor, cold, and death,
Which brooded o'er thy soul.

Fly hence, poor wretch, whoe'er thou art,
Condemned to cast about,
All shipwreck in thy own weak heart,
For comfort from without!

A fever in these pages burns
Beneath the calm they feign;
A wounded human spirit turns,
Here, on its bed of pain.

Yes, though the virgin mountain-air
Fresh through these pages blows;
Though to these leaves the glaciers spare
The soul of their mute snows;

Though here a mountain-murmur swells
Of many a dark-boughed pine;
Though, as you read, you hear the bells
Of the high-pasturing kine—

Yet, through the hum of torrent lone,
And brooding mountain-bee,
There sobs I know not what ground-tone
Of human agony.

Is it for this, because the sound
Is fraught too deep with pain,

That, Obermann! the world around
   So little loves thy strain?

. . . . . .

And then we turn, thou sadder sage,
   To thee! we feel thy spell!
—The hopeless tangle of our age,
   Thou too hast scanned it well!

Immovable thou sittest, still
   As death, composed to bear!
Thy head is clear, thy feeling chill,
   And icy thy despair.

. . . .

He who hath watched, not shared, the strife,
   Knows how the day hath gone.
He only lives with the world's life
   Who hath renounced his own.

To thee we come, then! Clouds are rolled
   Where thou, O seer! art set;
Thy realm of thought is drear and cold—
   The world is colder yet!

And thou hast pleasures, too, to share
   With those who come to thee—
Balms floating on thy mountain-air,
   And healing sights to see.

How often, where the slopes are green
   On Jaman, hast thou sate
By some high chalet-door, and seen
   The summer-day grow late;

And darkness steal o'er the wet grass
   With the pale crocus starr'd,
And reach that glimmering sheet of glass
   Beneath the piny sward,

Lake Leman's waters, far below!
   And watched the rosy light
Fade from the distant peaks of snow;
   And on the air of night

Heard accents of the eternal tongue
   Through the pine branches play—

Listened and felt thyself grow young!
  Listened, and wept—Away!

Away the dreams that but deceive!
  And thou, sad guide, adieu!
I go, fate drives me; but I leave
  Half of my life with you.

We, in some unknown Power's employ,
  Move on a rigorous line;
Can neither, when we will, enjoy,
  Nor, when we will, resign.

I in the world must live;—but thou,
  Thou melancholy shade!
Wilt not, if thou can'st see me now,
  Condemn me, nor upbraid.

For thou art gone away from earth,
  And place with those dost claim,
The Children of the Second Birth,
  Whom the world could not tame.

. . . .

Farewell!—Whether thou now liest near
  That much-loved inland sea,
The ripples of whose blue waves cheer
  Vevey and Meillerie;

And in that gracious region bland,
  Where with clear-rustling wave
The scented pines of Switzerland
  Stand dark round thy green grave,

Between the dusty vineyard-walls
  Issuing on that green place,
The early peasant still recalls
  The pensive stranger's face,

And stoops to clear thy moss-grown date
  Ere he plods on again;—
Or whether, by maligner fate,
  Among the swarms of men,

Where between granite terraces
  The blue Seine rolls her wave,

The Capital of Pleasures sees
   Thy hardly-heard-of grave;—

Farewell! Under the sky we part,
   In this stern Alpine dell.
O unstrung will! O broken heart!
   A last, a last farewell!

MEMORIAL VERSES (1850)

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
   Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease,
   But one such death remained to come;
The last poetic voice is dumb—
We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bowed our head and held our breath.
He taught us little; but our soul
Had felt him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with eternal law;
And yet with reverential awe
We watched the fount of fiery life
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said,—
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.
Physician of the iron age,
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.
He took the suffering human race,
   He read each wound, each weakness clear;
And struck his finger on the place,
   And said: Thou ailest here, and here!
He looked on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power;
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,
The turmoil of expiring life—
He said, The end is everywhere,
Art still has truth, take refuge there!
And he was happy, if to know
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth!—Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice!
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world conveyed,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.
Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!
He too upon a wintry clime
Had fallen—on this iron time
   Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round;
   He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth,
On the cool, flowery lap of earth.
Smiles broke from us and we had ease;
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sunlit fields again;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain,
Our youth returned; for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furled,
The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
Time may restore us in his course
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power?
Others will teach us how to dare,
   And against fear our breast to steel;
Others will strengthen us to bear—
   But who, ah! who, will make us feel?
The cloud of mortal destiny,
Others will front it fearlessly—
But who, like him, will put it by?
Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha, with thy living wave!
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

THE SICK KING IN BOKHARA

HUSSEIN

O MOST just Vizier, send away
The cloth-merchants, and let them be,
Them and their dues, this day! the King
Is ill at ease, and calls for thee.

THE VIZIER

O merchants, tarry yet a day
Here in Bokhara! but at noon,
To-morrow, come, and ye shall pay
Each fortieth web of cloth to me,
As the law is, and go your way.

O Hussein, lead me to the King!
Thou teller of sweet tales,—thine own,
Ferdousi's, and the others',—lead!
How is it with my lord?

HUSSEIN

Alone,
Ever since prayer-time, he doth wait,
O Vizier! without lying down,
In the great window of the gate,
Looking into the Registàn,
Where through the sellers' booths the slaves
Are this way bringing the dead man.—
O Vizier, here is the King's door!

THE KING

O Vizier, I may bury him?

THE VIZIER

O King, thou know'st, I have been sick
These many days, and heard no thing
(For Allah shut my ears and mind),
Not even what thou dost, O King!
Wherefore, that I may counsel thee,
Let Hussein, if thou wilt, make haste
To speak in order what hath chanced.

THE KING

O Vizier, be it as thou say'st!

HUSSEIN

Three days since, at the time of prayer,
A certain Moollah, with his robe
All rent, and dust upon his hair,
Watched my lord's coming forth, and pushed
The golden mace-bearers aside,
And fell at the King's feet, and cried:—

«Justice, O King, and on myself!
On this great sinner, who did break
The law, and by the law must die!
Vengeance, O King!»

But the King spake:—
«What fool is this, that hurts our ears
With folly? or what drunken slave?
My guards, what, prick him with your spears!
Prick me the fellow from the path!»

As the King said, so was it done,
And to the mosque my lord passed on.

But on the morrow when the King
Went forth again, the holy book
Carried before him, as his right,
And through the square his way he took,

My man comes running, flecked with blood
From yesterday, and falling down
Cries out most earnestly:—«O King,
My lord, O King, do right, I pray!

«How canst thou, ere thou hear, discern
If I speak folly? but a king,
Whether a thing be great or small,
Like Allah, hears and judges all.

«Wherefore hear thou! Thou know'st how fierce
In these last days the sun hath burned;
That the green water in the tanks
Is to a putrid puddle turned;
And the canal, that from the stream
Of Samarcand is brought this way,
Wastes, and runs thinner every day.

«Now I at nightfall had gone forth
   Alone, and in a darksome place
Under some mulberry trees I found
   A little pool; and in short space
With all the water that was there
I filled my pitcher, and stole home
Unseen; and having drink to spare,
I hid the can behind the door,
And went up on the roof to sleep.

«But in the night, which was with wind
And burning dust, again I creep
Down, having fever, for a drink.

«Now meanwhile had my brethren found
The water-pitcher, where it stood
Behind the door upon the ground,
And called my mother; and they all,
As they were thirsty, and the night
Most sultry, drained the pitcher there;
That they sate with it, in my sight,
Their lips still wet, when I came down.

«Now mark! I, being fevered, sick
   (Most unblest also), at that sight
Brake forth, and cursed them—dost thou hear?—
   One was my mother— Now, do right!»

But my lord mused a space, and said:—
   «Send him away, sirs, and make on!
It is some madman!» the King said.
   As the King bade, so was it done.

The morrow, at the self-same hour,
   In the King's path, behold, the man,
Not kneeling, sternly fixed! he stood
   Right opposite, and thus began,

Frowning grim down:—«Thou wicked King,
   Most deaf where thou shouldst most give ear!
What, must I howl in the next world,
   Because thou wilt not listen here?

«What, wilt thou pray, and get thee grace,
   And all grace shall to me be grudged?
Nay, but I swear, from this thy path
   I will not stir till I be judged!»

Then they who stood about the King
Drew close together and conferred;
Till that the King stood forth and said,
«Before the priests thou shalt be heard.»

But when the Ulemas were met,
And the thing heard, they doubted not;
But sentenced him, as the law is,
To die by stoning on the spot.

Now the King charged us secretly:—
«Stoned must he be, the law stands so.
Yet, if he seek to fly, give way;
Hinder him not, but let him go.»

So saying, the King took a stone,
And cast it softly;—but the man,
With a great joy upon his face,
Kneeled down, and cried not, neither ran.

So they, whose lot it was, cast stones,
That they flew thick and bruised him sore,
But he praised Allah with loud voice,
And remained kneeling as before.

My lord had covered up his face;
But when one told him, «He is dead,»
Turning him quickly to go in,—
«Bring thou to me his corpse,» he said.

And truly while I speak, O King,
I hear the bearers on the stair;
Wilt thou they straightway bring him in?
—Ho! enter ye who tarry there!

THE VIZIER

O King, in this I praise thee not.
Now must I call thy grief not wise,
Is he thy friend, or of thy blood,
To find such favor in thine eyes?

Nay, were he thine own mother's son,
Still, thou art king, and the law stands.
It were not meet the balance swerved,
The sword were broken in thy hands.

But being nothing, as he is,
Why for no cause make sad thy face?—

Lo, I am old! Three kings, ere thee,
Have I seen reigning in this place.

But who, through all this length of time,
Could bear the burden of his years,
If he for strangers pained his heart
Not less than those who merit tears?

Fathers we must have, wife and child,
And grievous is the grief for these;
This pain alone, which must be borne,
Makes the head white, and bows the knees.

But other loads than this his own
One man is not well made to bear.
Besides, to each are his own friends,
To mourn with him, and show him care.

Look, this is but one single place,
Though it be great; all the earth round,
If a man bear to have it so,
Things which might vex him shall be found.

. . . .

All these have sorrow, and keep still,
Whilst other men make cheer, and sing,
Wilt thou have pity on all these?
No, nor on this dead dog, O King!

THE KING

O Vizier, thou art old, I young!
Clear in these things I cannot see.
My head is burning, and a heat
Is in my skin which angers me.

But hear ye this, ye sons of men!
They that bear rule, and are obeyed,
Unto a rule more strong than theirs
Are in their turn obedient made.

In vain therefore, with wistful eyes
Gazing up hither, the poor man
Who loiters by the high-heaped booths,
Below there in the Registàn,

Says:—“Happy he, who lodges there!
With silken raiment, store of rice,

And for this drought, all kinds of fruits,
Grape-syrup, squares of colored ice,

With cherries served in drifts of snow.»
In vain hath a king power to build
Houses, arcades, enameled mosques;
And to make orchard-closes, filled

With curious fruit-trees brought from far;
With cisterns for the winter rain;
And in the desert, spacious inns
In divers places—if that pain

Is not more lightened, which he feels,
If his will be not satisfied;
And that it be not, from all time
The law is planted, to abide.

Thou wast a sinner, thou poor man!
Thou wast athirst, and didst not see
That, though we take what we desire,
We must not snatch it eagerly.

And I have meat and drink at will,
And rooms of treasures, not a few,
But I am sick, nor heed I these;
And what I would, I cannot do.

Even the great honor which I have,
When I am dead, will soon grow still;
So have I neither joy nor fame—
But what I can do, that I will.

I have a fretted brickwork tomb
Upon a hill on the right hand,
Hard by a close of apricots,
Upon the road of Samarcand;

Thither, O Vizier, will I bear
This man my pity could not save,
And plucking up the marble flags,
There lay his body in my grave.

Bring water, nard, and linen rolls!
Wash off all blood, set smooth each limb!
Then say:—«He was not wholly vile,
Because a king shall bury him.»

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.

Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
«Ye who from my childhood up have calmed me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

Ah, once more,» I cried, «ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you.»

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:—
«Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

«Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

«And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

«Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see.»

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:—
«Resolve to be thyself; and know that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery!»

STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE

. . . .

OH, HIDE me in your gloom profound,
Ye solemn seats of holy pain!
Take me, cowled forms, and fence me round,
Till I possess my soul again;
Till free my thoughts before me roll,
Not chafed by hourly false control!

For the world cries your faith is now
But a dead time's exploded dream;
My melancholy, sciolists say,
Is a passed mood, and outworn theme —
As if the world had ever had
A faith, or sciolists been sad!

Ah, if it *be* passed, take away
At least the restlessness, the pain!
Be man henceforth no more a prey
To these out-dated stings again!
The nobleness of grief is gone —
Ah, leave us not the fret alone!

But — if you cannot give us ease —
Last of the race of them who grieve,
Here leave us to die out with these
Last of the people who believe!
Silent, while years engrave the brow;
Silent — the best are silent now.

Achilles ponders in his tent,
The kings of modern thought are dumb;
Silent they are, though not content,
And wait to see the future come.
They have the grief men had of yore,
But they contend and cry no more.

Our fathers watered with their tears
This sea of time whereon we sail;
Their voices were in all men's ears
Who passed within their puissant hail.
Still the same ocean round us raves,
But we stand mute and watch the waves.

For what availed it, all the noise
 And outcry of the former men?—
Say, have their sons achieved more joys,
 Say, is life lighter now than then?
The sufferers died, they left their pain—
The pangs which tortured them remain.

What helps it now that Byron bore,
 With haughty scorn which mocked the smart,
Through Europe to the Ætolian shore
 The pageant of his bleeding heart?
That thousands counted every groan,
And Europe made his woe her own?

What boots it, Shelley! that the breeze
 Carried thy lovely wail away,
Musical through Italian trees
 Which fringe thy soft blue Spezzian bay?
Inheritors of thy distress,
Have restless hearts one throb the less?

Or are we easier to have read,
 O Obermann! the sad, stern page,
Which tells us how thou hidd'st thy head
 From the fierce tempest of thine age
In the lone brakes of Fontainebleau,
Or châlets near the Alpine snow?

Ye slumber in your silent grave!—
 The world, which for an idle day
Grace to your mood of sadness gave,
 Long since hath flung her weeds away.
The eternal trifler breaks your spell;
But we—we learnt your lore too well!

Years hence, perhaps, may dawn an age,
 More fortunate, alas! than we,
Which without hardness will be sage,
 And gay without frivolity.
Sons of the world, oh, speed those years;
But while we wait, allow our tears!

A SUMMER NIGHT

IN THE deserted, moon-blanched street,
How lonely rings the echo of my feet!
Those windows, which I gaze at, frown,
Silent and white, unopening down,
Repellent as the world, — but see,
A break between the housetops shows
The moon! and lost behind her, fading dim
Into the dewy dark obscurity
Down at the far horizon's rim,
Doth a whole tract of heaven disclose!

And to my mind the thought
Is on a sudden brought
Of a past night, and a far different scene:
Headlands stood out into the moonlit deep
As clearly as at noon;
The spring-tide's brimming flow
Heaved dazzlingly between;
Houses, with long wide sweep,
Girdled the glistening bay;
Behind, through the soft air,
The blue haze-cradled mountains spread away.
That night was far more fair —
But the same restless pacings to and fro,
And the same vainly throbbing heart was there,
And the same bright, calm moon.

And the calm moonlight seems to say: —
Hast thou then still the old unquiet breast,
Which neither deadens into rest,
Nor ever feels the fiery glow
That whirls the spirit from itself away,
But fluctuates to and fro,
Never by passion quite possessed
And never quite benumbed by the world's sway? —
And I, I know not if to pray
Still to be what I am, or yield, and be
Like all the other men I see.

For most men in a brazen prison live,
Where, in the sun's hot eye,
With heads bent o'er their toil, they languidly
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork give,
Dreaming of naught beyond their prison wall.
And as, year after year,

Fresh products of their barren labor fall
From their tired hands, and rest
Never yet comes more near,
Gloom settles slowly down over their breast.
And while they try to stem
The waves of mournful thought by which they are prest,
Death in their prison reaches them,
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest.

And the rest, a few,
Escape their prison and depart
On the wide ocean of life anew.
There the freed prisoner, where'er his heart
Listeth will sail;
Nor doth he know how there prevail,
Despotic on that sea,
Trade-winds which cross it from eternity:
Awhile he holds some false way, undebarred
By thwarting signs, and braves
The freshening wind and blackening waves.
And then the tempest strikes him; and between
The lightning bursts is seen
Only a driving wreck,
And the pale master on his spar-strewn deck
With anguished face and flying hair
Grasping the rudder hard,
Still bent to make some port he knows not where,
Still standing for some false, impossible shore.
And sterner comes the roar
Of sea and wind, and through the deepening gloom
Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman loom,
And he too disappears, and comes no more.

Is there no life, but these alone?
Madman or slave, must man be one?

Plainness and clearness without shadow of stain!
Clearness divine!
Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions have no sign
Of languor, though so calm, and though so great
Are yet untroubled and unpassionate;
Who, though so noble, share in the world's toil,
And, though so tasked, keep free from dust and soil!
I will not say that your mild deeps retain
A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain
Who have longed deeply once, and longed in vain—
But I will rather say that you remain

A world above man's head, to let him see
How boundless might his soul's horizons be,
How vast, yet of what clear transparency!
How it were good to live there, and breathe free;
How fair a lot to fill
Is left to each man still!

THE BETTER PART

Long fed on boundless hopes, O race of man,
How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler fare!
«Christ,» some one says, «was human as we are;
No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin to scan;
We live no more when we have done our span.»—
«Well, then, for Christ,» thou answerest, «who can care?
From sin, which Heaven records not, why forbear?
Live we like brutes our life without a plan!»
So answerest thou; but why not rather say,
«Hath man no second life?—Pitch this one high!
Sits there no judge in Heaven our sin to see?—
More strictly, then, the inward judge obey!
Was Christ a man like us?—Ah! let us try
If we then, too, can be such men as he!»

THE LAST WORD

Creep into thy narrow bed,
Creep, and let no more be said!
Vain thy onset! all stands fast.
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease!
Geese are swans, and swans are geese.
Let them have it how they will!
Thou art tired; best be still.

They out-talked thee, hissed thee, tore thee?
Better men fared thus before thee;
Fired their ringing shot and passed,
Hotly charged — and sank at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb!
Let the victors, when they come,
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall!

THE ARTHURIAN LEGENDS

(Eighth to Twelfth Centuries)

BY RICHARD JONES

For nearly a thousand years, the Arthurian legends, which lie at the basis of Tennyson's ‘Idylls of the King,’ have furnished unlimited literary material, not to English poets alone, but to the poets of all Christendom. These Celtic romances, having their birthplace in Brittany or in Wales, had been growing and changing for some centuries, before the fanciful ‘Historia Britonum’ of Geoffrey of Monmouth flushed them with color and filled them with new life. Through the version of the good Benedictine they soon became a vehicle for the dissemination of Christian doctrine. By the year 1200 they were the common property of Europe, influencing profoundly the literature of the Middle Ages, and becoming the source of a great stream of poetry that has flowed without interruption down to our own day.

Sixty years after the ‘Historia Britonum’ appeared, and when the English poet Layamon wrote his ‘Brut’ (A. D. 1205), which was a translation of Wace, as Wace was a translation of Geoffrey, the theme was engrossing the imagination of Europe. It had absorbed into itself the elements of other cycles of legend, which had grown up independently; some of these, in fact, having been at one time of much greater prominence. Finally, so vast and so complicated did the body of Arthurian legend become, that summaries of the essential features were attempted. Such a summary was made in French about 1270, by the Italian Rustighello of Pisa; in German, about two centuries later, by Ulrich Füterer; and in English by Sir Thomas Malory in his ‘Morte d'Arthur,’ finished “the ix. yere of the reygne of kyng Edward the Fourth,” and one of the first books published in England by Caxton, “emprynted and fynysshed in th'abbey Westmestre the last day of July, the yere of our Lord MCCCCLXXXV.” It is of interest to note, as an indication of the popularity of the Arthurian legends, that Caxton printed the ‘Morte d'Arthur’ eight years before he printed any portion of the English Bible, and fifty-three years before the complete English Bible was in print. He printed the ‘Morte d'Arthur’ in response to a general “demaund”; for “many noble and dyvers gentylmen of thys royame of England camen and demaunded me many and oftymes wherefore that I have not do make and enprynte the noble hystorye of the saynt greal, and of the moost renomed crysten kyng, fyrst and chyef of the thre best crysten and worthy, kyng Arthur, whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge us Englysshe men tofore al other crysten kynges.»

Nor did poetic treatment of the theme then cease. Dante, in the ‹Divine Comedy,› speaks by name of Arthur, Guinevere, Tristan, and Launcelot. In that touching interview in the second cycle of the Inferno between the poet and Francesca da Rimini, which Carlyle has called «a thing woven out of rainbows on a ground of eternal black,» Francesca replies to Dante, who was bent to know the primal root whence her love for Paolo gat being:—

> «One day
> For our delight, we read of Launcelot,
> How him love thralled. Alone we were, and no
> Suspicion near us. Oft-times by that reading
> Our eyes were drawn together, and the hue
> Fled from our altered cheek. But at one point
> Alone we fell. When of that smile we read,
> The wished smile, rapturously kissed
> By one so deep in love, then he, who ne'er
> From me shall separate, at once my lips
> All trembling kissed. The book and writer both
> Were love's purveyors. In its leaves that day
> We read no more.»

This poetic material was appropriated also by the countrymen of Dante, Boiardo, Ariosto, and Tasso, by Hans Sachs in Germany, by Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton in England. As Sir Walter Scott has sung:—

> «The mightiest chiefs of British song
> Scorned not such legends to prolong.»

Roger Ascham, it is true, has, in his ‹Scholemaster› (1570 A. D.), broken a lance against this body of fiction. «In our forefathers' tyme,» wrote he, «whan Papistrie, as a standyng poole, couered and ouerflowed all England, fewe bookes were read in our tong, sauyng certaine bookes of Cheualrie, as they sayd, for pastime and pleasure, which, as some say, were made in Monasteries, by idle Monkes, or wanton Chanons; as one for example, ‹Morte Arthure›: the whole pleasure of which booke standeth in two speciall poyntes, in open mans slaughter, and bold bawdrye: in which booke those be counted the noblest Knights, that do kill most men without any quarrell, and commit foulest aduoulteries by sutlest shiftes.»

But Roger's characterization of «the whole pleasure of which booke» was not just, nor did it destroy interest in the theme. «The generall end of all the booke,» said Spenser of the ‹Faerie Queene,› «is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline;» and for this purpose he therefore «chose the historye of King Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many men's former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of envie, and suspition of present tyme.»

The plots for Shakespeare's ‹King Lear› and ‹Cymbeline› came from Geoffrey's ‹Historia Britonum,› as did also the story of ‹Gorboduc,› the first tragedy in the English language. Milton intended at one time that the subject of the great poem for which he was «pluming his wings» should be King Arthur, as may be seen, in his ‹Mansus› and ‹Epitaphium Damonis.› Indeed, he did touch the lyre upon this theme,—lightly, it is true, but firmly enough to justify Swinburne's lines:—

«Yet Milton's sacred feet have lingered there,
His lips have made august the fabulous air,
His hands have touched and left the wild weeds fair.»

But his duties as Latin Secretary to the Commonwealth diverted him from poetry for many years, and when the Restoration gave him leisure once more to court the Muse, he had come to doubt the existence of the Celtic hero-king; for in ‹Paradise Lost› (Book i., line 579) he refers to

«what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son;»

and in his ‹History of Britain› (1670 A. D.) he says explicitly:—«For who Arthur was, and whether ever any such reign'd in Britan, hath bin doubted heertofore, and may again with good reason.»

Dryden, who composed the words of an opera on King Arthur, meditated, according to Sir Walter Scott, a larger treatment of the theme:—

«And Dryden in immortal strain
Had raised the Table Round again,
But that a ribald King and Court
Bade him toil on to make them sport.»

Sir Walter himself edited the old metrical romance of ‹Sir Tristram,› and where the manuscript was defective, composed a portion after the manner of the original, the portion in which occur the lines,

«Mi schip do thou take,
With godes that bethe new;
Two seyles do thou make,
Beth different in hewe:

. . . . .

«Ysoude of Britanye,
With the white honde,
The schip she can se,
Seyling to londe;
The white seyl tho marked sche.

. . . . . .

«Fairer ladye ere
Did Britannye never spye,
Swiche murning chere,
Making on heighe;
On Tristremes bere,
Doun con she lye;
Rise ogayn did sche nere,
But thare con sche dye
For woe:
Swiche lovers als thei
Never schal be moe.»

Of the poets of the present generation, Tennyson has treated the Arthurian poetic heritage as a whole. Phases of the Arthurian theme have been presented also by his contemporaries and successors at home and abroad,—by William Wordsworth, Lord Lytton, Robert Stephen Hawker, Matthew Arnold, William Morris, Algernon Charles Swinburne, in England; Edgar Quinet in France; Wilhelm Hertz, L. Schneegans, F. Roeber, in Germany; Richard Hovey in America. There have been many other approved variations on Arthurian themes, such as James Russell Lowell's ‹Vision of Sir Launfal,› and Richard Wagner's operas, ‹Lohengrin,› ‹Tristan and Isolde,› and ‹Parsifal.› Of still later versions, we may mention the ‹King Arthur› of J. Comyns Carr, which has been presented on the stage by Sir Henry Irving; and ‹Under King Constantine,› by Katrina Trask, whose hero is the king whom tradition names as the successor of the heroic Arthur, «Imperator, Dux Bellorum.»

This poetic material is manifestly a living force in the literature of the present day. And we may well remind ourselves of the rule which should govern our verdict in regard to the new treatments of the theme as they appear. This century-old ‹Dichterstoff,› this poetic treasure-store through which speaks the voice of the race, this great body of accumulated poetic material, is a heritage; and it is evident that whoever attempts any phase of this theme may not treat such subject-matter capriciously, nor otherwise than in harmony with its inherent nature and spirit. It is recognized that the stuff whereof great poetry is made is not the arbitrary creation of the poet, and cannot be manufactured to order. «Genuine poetic material,» it has been said, «is handed down in the imagination of man from generation to generation, changing its spirit according to the spirit of each age, and reaching its full development only when in the course of time the favorable conditions coincide.» Inasmuch as the subject-matter of the Arthurian legends is not the creation of a single poet, nor even of many poets, but is in fact the creation of the people,—indeed, of many peoples widely separated in time and space, and is thus in a sense the voice of the race,—it resembles in this respect the Faust legends, which are the basis of Goethe's world-poem; or the mediæval visions of a future state, which found their supreme and final expression in Dante's 'Divina Commedia,' which sums up within itself the art, the religion, the politics, the philosophy, and the view of life of the Middle Ages.

Whether the Arthurian legends as a whole have found their final and adequate expression in Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King,' or whether it was already too late, when the Laureate wrote, to create from primitive ideas so simple a poem of the first rank, is not within the province of this essay to discuss. But manifestly, any final judgment in regard to the treatment of this theme as a whole, or any phase of the theme, is inadequate which leaves out of consideration the history of the subject-matter, and its treatment by other poets; which, in short, ignores its possibilities and its significance. With respect to the origin and the early history of the Arthurian legend, much remains to be established. Whether its original home was in Wales, or among the neighboring Celts across the sea in Brittany, whither many of the Celts of Britain fled after the Anglo-Saxon invasion of their island home, no one knows. But to some extent, at least, the legend was common to both sides of the Channel when Geoffrey wrote his book, about 1145. As a matter of course, this King Arthur, the ideal hero of later ages, was a less commanding personage in the early forms of the legend than when it had acquired its splendid distinction by borrowing and assimilating other mythical tales.

It appears that five great cycles of legend,—(1) the Arthur, Guinevere, and Merlin cycle, (2) the Round Table cycle, (3) the Holy Grail cycle, (4) the Launcelot cycle, (5) the Tristan cycle,—which at first developed independently, were, in the latter half of the twelfth century, merged together into a body of legend whose bond of unity was the idealized Celtic hero, King Arthur.

This blameless knight, whose transfigured memory has been thus transmitted to us, was probably a leader of the Celtic tribes of England in their struggles with the Saxon invaders. His victory at Mount Badon, described by Sir Launcelot to the household at Astolat,—

> «Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke
> The pagan yet once more on Badon Hill,»—

this victory is mentioned by Gildas, who wrote in the sixth century. Gildas, however, though he mentions the occasion, does not give the name of the leader. But Nennius, who wrote in the latter part of the eighth century, or early in the ninth, makes Arthur the chieftain, and adds an account of his great personal prowess. Thus the Arthur legend has already begun to grow. For the desperate struggle with the Saxons was vain. As the highly gifted, imaginative Celt saw his people overwhelmed by the kinsmen of the conquerors of Rome, he found solace in song for the hard facts of life. In the fields of imagination he won the victories denied him on the field of battle, and he clustered these triumphs against the enemies of his race about the name and the person of the magnanimous Arthur. When the descendants of the Saxons were in their turn overcome by Norman conquerors, the heart of the Celtic world was profoundly stirred. Ancient memories awoke, and, yearning for the restoration of British greatness, men rehearsed the deeds of him who had been king, and of whom it was prophesied that he should be king hereafter. At this moment of newly awakened hope, Geoffrey's ‹Historia› appeared. His book was not in reality a history. Possibly it was not even very largely founded on existing legends. But in any case the chronicle of Geoffrey was a work of genius and of imagination. «The figure of Arthur,» says Ten Brink, «now stood forth in brilliant light, a chivalrous king and hero, endowed and guarded by supernatural powers, surrounded by brave warriors and a splendid court, a man of marvelous life and a tragic death.»

Geoffrey's book was immediately translated into French by Robert Wace, who incorporated with the legend of Arthur the Round Table legend. In his ‹Brut,› the English poet-priest Layamon reproduced this feature of the legend with additional details. His chronicle is largely a free translation of the ‹Brut d'Engleterre› of Wace, earlier known as ‹Geste des Bretons.› Thus as Wace had reproduced Geoffrey with additions and modifications, Layamon reproduced Wace. So the story grew. In the mean time, other poets in other lands had taken up the theme, connecting with it other cycles of legend already in existence. In 1205, when Layamon wrote his ‹Brut,› unnumbered versions of the history of King Arthur, with which had been woven the legend of the Holy Grail, had already appeared among the principal nations of Europe. Of the early Arthurian poets, two of the more illustrious and important are Chrestien de Troyes, in France, of highest poetic repute, who opened the way for Tennyson, and Wolfram von Eschenbach, in Germany, with his ‹Parzival,› later the theme of Wagner's greatest opera. The names of Robert de Borron in France, Walter Map in England, and Heinrich von dem Türlin in Germany, may also be mentioned.

In divers lands, innumerable poets with diverse tastes set themselves to make new versions of the legend. Characteristics of the Arthurian tale were grafted upon an entirely different stock, as was done by Boiardo in Italy, making confusion worse confounded to the modern Arthurian scholar. Boiardo expressly says in the ‹Orlando Innamorato› that his intention is to graft the characteristics of the Arthurian cycle upon the Carlovingian French national epic stock. He wished to please the courts, whose ideal was not the paladins, but Arthur's knights. The «peers» of the Charlemagne legend are thus transformed into knights-errant, who fight for ladies and for honor. The result of this interpenetration of the two cycles is a splendid world of love and *cortesia*, whose constituent elements it defies the Arthurian scholar to trace. Truly, as Dr. Sommer has said in his erudite edition of Malory's ‹La Morte d'Arthur,› «The origin and relationship to one another of these branches of romance, whether in prose or in verse, are involved in great obscurity.» He adds that it would almost seem as though several generations of scholars were required for the gigantic task of finding a sure pathway through this intricate maze. And M. Gaston Paris, one of the foremost of living Arthurian scholars, has written in his ‹Romania›: «Some time ago I undertook a methodical exploration in the grand poetical domain which is called the cycle of the Round Table, the cycle of Arthur, or the Breton cycle. I advance, groping along, and very often retracing my steps twenty times over, I become aware that I am lost in a pathless maze.»

There is a question, moreover, whether Geoffrey's book is based mainly upon inherited poetical material, or is largely the product of Geoffrey's individual imagination. The elder Paris, M. Paulin Paris, inclined to the view that Nennius, with hints from local tales, supplied all the bases that Geoffrey had. But his son, Professor Gaston Paris, in his ‹Littérature Française au Moyen Age,› emphasizes the importance of the «Celtic» contribution, as does also Mr. Alfred Nutt in his ‹Studies in the Arthurian Legend.› The former view emphasizes the individual importance of Geoffrey; the latter view places the emphasis on the legendary heritage. Referring to this so-called national poetry, Ten Brink says:—

> «But herein lies the essential difference between that age and our own: the result of poetical activity was not the property and not the production of a single person, but of the community. The work of the individual singer endured only as long as its delivery lasted. He gained personal distinction only as a virtuoso. The permanent elements of what he presented, the material, the ideas, even the style and metre, already existed. The work of the singer was only a ripple in the stream of national poetry. Who can say how much the individual contributed to it, or where in his poetical recitation

memory ceased and creative impulse began! In any case the work of the individual lived on only as the ideal possession of the aggregate body of the people, and it soon lost the stamp of originality.»

When Geoffrey wrote, this period of national poetry was drawing to a close; but it was not yet closed. Alfred Nutt, in his 'Studies in the Legend of the Holy Grail,' speaking of Wolfram von Eschenbach, who wrote his 'Parzival' about the time that the 'Nibelungenlied' was given its present form (*i. e.*, about a half-century after Geoffrey), says:—«Compared with the unknown poets who gave their present shape to the 'Nibelungenlied' or to the 'Chanson de Roland,' he is an individual writer; but he is far from deserving this epithet even in the sense that Chaucer deserves it.» Professor Rhys says, in his 'Studies in the Arthurian Legend':—«Leaving aside for a while the man Arthur, and assuming the existence of a god of that name, let us see what could be made of him. Mythologically speaking, he would probably have to be regarded as a Culture Hero,» etc.

To summarize this discussion of the difficulties of the theme, there are now existing, scattered throughout the libraries and the monasteries of Europe, unnumbered versions of the Arthurian legends. Some of these are early versions, some are late, and some are intermediate. What is the relation of all these versions to one another? Which are the oldest, and which are copies, and of what versions are they copies? What is the land of their origin, and what is the significance of their symbolism? These problems, weighty in tracing the growth of mediæval ideals,—*i. e.*, in tracing the development of the realities of the present from the ideals of the past,—are still under investigation by the specialists. The study of the Arthurian legends is in itself a distinct branch of learning, which demands the lifelong labors of scholarly devotees.

There now remains to consider the extraordinary spread of the legend in the closing decades of the twelfth century and in the century following. Though Tennyson has worthily celebrated as the morning star of English song—

«Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still,»

yet the centuries before Chaucer, far from being barren of literature, were periods of rich poetical activity both in England and on the Continent. Eleanor of Aquitaine, formerly Queen of France,—who had herself gone on a crusade to the Holy Land, and who, on returning, married in 1152 Henry of Anjou, who became in 1155 Henry II.

of England,—was an ardent patroness of the art of poetry, and personally aroused the zeal of poets. The famous troubadour Bernard de Ventadorn—«with whom,» says Ten Brink, «the Provençal art-poesy entered upon the period of its florescence»—followed her to England, and addressed to her his impassioned verse. Wace, the Norman-French *trouvere*, dedicated to her his 'Brut.' The ruling classes of England at this time were truly cosmopolitan, familiar with the poetic material of many lands. Jusserand, in his 'English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare,' discussing a poem of the following century written in French by a Norman monk of Westminster and dedicated to Eleanor of Provence, wife of Henry III., says:—«Rarely was the like seen in any literature: here is a poem dedicated to a Frenchwoman by a Norman of England, which begins with the praise of a Briton, a Saxon, and a Dane.»

But the ruling classes of England were not the only cosmopolitans, nor the only possessors of fresh poetic material. Throughout Europe in general, the conditions were favorable for poetic production. The Crusades had brought home a larger knowledge of the world, and the stimulus of new experiences. Western princes returned with princesses of the East as their brides, and these were accompanied by splendid trains, including minstrels and poets. Thus Europe gathered in new poetic material, which stimulated and developed the poetical activity of the age. Furthermore, the Crusades had aroused an intense idealism, which, as always, demanded and found poetic expression. The dominant idea pervading the earlier forms of the Charlemagne stories, the unswerving loyalty due from a vassal to his lord,—that is, the feudal view of life,—no longer found an echo in the hearts of men. The time was therefore propitious for the development of a new cycle of legend.

Though by the middle of the twelfth century the Arthurian legend had been long in existence, and King Arthur had of late been glorified by Geoffrey's book, the legend was not yet supreme in popular interest. It became so through its association, a few years later, with the legend of the Holy Grail,—the San Graal, the holy vessel which received at the Cross the blood of Christ, which was now become a symbol of the Divine Presence. This holy vessel had been brought by Joseph of Arimathea from Palestine to Britain, but was now, alas, vanished quite from the sight of man. It was the holy quest for this sacred vessel, to which the knights of the Round Table now bound themselves,—this «search for the supernatural,» this «struggle for the spiritual,» this blending of the spirit of Christianity with that of chivalry,—which immediately transformed the Arthurian legend, and gave to its heroes immortality. At once a new spirit breathes in the old legend. In a few years it is become a mystical, symbolical, anagogical tale, inculcating one of the profoundest dogmas of the Holy Catholic Church, a bearer of a Christian doctrine engrossing the thought of the Christian world. And inasmuch as the transformed Arthurian legend now taught by implication the doctrine of the Divine Presence, its spread was in every way furthered by the great power of the Church, whose spiritual rulers made the minstrel doubly welcome when celebrating this theme.

For there was heresy to be combated; viz., the heresy of the scholastic theologian Berengar of Tours, who had attacked the doctrine of the transubstantiation of the bread and the wine of the Eucharist into the body and blood of Christ. Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the most brilliant of the Middle Age theologians, felt impelled to reply to Berengar, who had been his personal friend; and he did so in the 'Liber Scintillarum,' which was a vigorous, indeed a violent, defense of the doctrine denied by Berengar. Berengar died in 1088; but he left a considerable body of followers. The heretics were anathematized by the Second Lateran Ecumenical Council held in Rome in 1139. Again, in 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council declared transubstantiation to be an article of faith, and in 1264 a special holy day, Corpus Christi,—viz., the first Thursday after Trinity Sunday,—was set apart to give an annual public manifestation of the belief of the Church in the doctrine of the Eucharist.

But when the Fourth Lateran Ecumenical Council met in 1215, the transformation of the Arthurian legend by means of its association with the legend of the Holy Grail was already complete, and the transformed legend, now become a defender of the faith, was engrossing the imagination of Europe. The subsequent influence of the legend was doubtless to some extent associated with the discussions which continually came up anew respecting the meaning of the doctrine of the Eucharist; for it was not until the Council of Trent (1545–63) that the doctrine was finally and authoritatively defined. In the mean time there was interminable discussion respecting the nature of this «real presence,» respecting *tran*substantiation and *con*substantiation and impanation, respecting the actual presence of the body and blood of Christ under the *appearance* of the bread and wine, or the presence of the body and blood *together with* the bread and wine. The professor of philosophy in the University of Oxford, who passes daily through Logic Lane, has said that there the followers of Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas were wont to come to blows in the eagerness of their discussion respecting the proper definition of the doctrine. Nor was the doctrine without interest to the Reformers. Luther and Zwingli held opposing views, and Calvin was involved in a long dispute concerning the doctrine, which resulted in the division of the evangelical body into the two parties of the

Lutherans and the Reformed. Doubtless the connection between the Arthurian legend and the doctrine of the Divine Presence was not without influence on the unparalleled spread of the legend in the closing decades of the twelfth century, and on its prominence in the centuries following.

A suggestion has already been given of the vast development of the Arthurian legends during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, and of the importance of the labors of the specialists, who are endeavoring to fix a date for these versions in order to infer therefrom the spiritual ideals of the people among whom they arose. To perceive clearly to what extent ideals do change, it is but necessary to compare various versions of the same incident as given in various periods of time. To go no farther back than Malory, for example, we observe a signal difference between his treatment of the sin of Guinevere and Launcelot, and the treatment of the theme by Tennyson. Malory's Arthur is not so much wounded by the treachery of Launcelot, of whose relations to Guinevere he had long been aware, as he is angered at Sir Modred for making public those disclosures which made it necessary for him and Sir Launcelot to «bee at debate.» «Ah! Agravaine, Agravaine,» cries the King, «Jesu forgive it thy soule! for thine evill will that thou and thy brother Sir Modred had unto Sir Launcelot hath caused all this sorrow. . . . Wit you well my heart was never so heavie as it is now, and much more I am sorrier for my good knights losse than for the losse of my queene, for queenes might I have enough, but such a fellowship of good knightes shall never bee together in no company.» But to the great Poet Laureate, who voices the modern ideal, a true marriage is the crown of life. To love one maiden only, to cleave to her and worship her by years of noblest deeds, to be joined with her and to live together as one life, and, reigning with one will in all things, to have power on this dead world to make it live, — this was the high ideal of the blameless King,

«Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee.»

And his farewell from her who had not made his life so sweet that he should greatly care to live, —

«Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: . . .
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,» —

this is altogether one of the noblest passages in modern verse.

A comparison of the various modern treatments of the Tristram theme, as given by Tennyson, Richard Wagner, F. Roeber, L. Schneegans, Matthew Arnold, Algernon Charles Swinburne, F. Millard, touching also on the Tristan of Hans Sachs, and the Tristram who, because he is true to love, is the darling of the old romances, and is there — notwithstanding that his love is the wedded wife of another — always represented as the strong and beautiful knight, the flower of courtesy, a model to youth,— such a comparison would reveal striking differences between mediæval and modern ideals.

In making the comparison, however, care must be exercised to select the modern treatment of the theme which represents correctly the modern ideal. The Middle Age romances, sung by wandering minstrels, before the invention of the printing press, doubtless expressed the ideals of the age in which they were produced more infallibly than does the possibly individualistic conception of the modern poet; for, of the earlier forms of the romance, only those which found general favor were likely to be preserved and handed down. This inference may be safely made because of the method of the dissemination of the poems before the art of printing was known. It is true that copies of them were carried in manuscript from country to country; but the more important means of dissemination were the minstrels, who passed from court to court and land to land, singing the songs which they had made or heard. In that age there was little thought of literary proprietorship. The poem belonged to him who could recall it. And as each minstrel felt free to adopt whatever poem he found or heard that pleased him, so he felt free also to modify the incidents thereof, guided only by his experience as to what pleased his hearers. Hence the countless variations in the treatment of the theme, and the value of the conclusions that may be drawn as to the moral sentiment of an age, the quality of whose moral judgments is indicated by the prevailing tone of the songs which persisted because they pleased. Unconformable variations, which express the view of an individual rather than the view of a people, may have come down to us in an accidentally preserved manuscript; but the songs which were sung by the poets of all lands give expression to the view of life of the age, and reveal the morals and the ideals of nations, whose history in this respect may otherwise be lost to us. What some of these ideals were, as revealed by this rich store of poetic material which grew up about the chivalrous and spiritual ideals of the Middle Ages, and what the corresponding modern ideals are,— what, in brief, some of the hitherto dimly discerned ethical movements of the past seven hundred years have in reality been, and whither they seem to be tending,— surely, clear knowledge on these themes is an end worthy the supreme endeavor of finished scholars, whose training has made them expert in interpreting the aspirations of each age, and in tracing the evolution of the ideals of the past into the realities of the present. And though, as M. Gaston Paris has said, the path of the Arthurian scholar seems at times to be an inextricable maze, yet the value of the results already achieved, and the possibility of still greater results, will doubtless prove a sufficient encouragement to the several generations of scholars which, as Dr. Sommer suggests, are needed for the gigantic task.

Richard Jones

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH'S ‹HISTORIA BRITONUM›

Arthur Succeeds Uther, his Father, in the Kingdom of Britain, and Besieges Colgrin

Uther Pendragon being dead, the nobility from several provinces assembled together at Silchester, and proposed to Dubricius, Archbishop of Legions, that he should consecrate Arthur, Uther's son, to be their king. For they were now in great straits, because, upon hearing of the king's death, the Saxons had invited over their countrymen from Germany, and were attempting, under the command of Colgrin, to exterminate the whole British race. . . . Dubricius, therefore, grieving for the calamities of his country, in conjunction with the other bishops set the crown upon Arthur's head. Arthur was then only fifteen years old, but a youth of such unparalleled courage and generosity, joined with that sweetness of temper and innate goodness, as gained for him universal love. When his coronation was over, he, according to usual custom, showed his bounty and munificence to the people. And such a number of soldiers flocked to him upon it that his treasury was not able to answer that vast expense. But such a spirit of generosity, joined with valor, can never long want means to support itself. Arthur, therefore, the better to keep up his munificence, resolved to make use of his courage, and to fall upon the Saxons, that he might enrich his followers with their wealth. To this he was also moved by the justice of the cause, since the entire monarchy of Britain belonged to him by hereditary right. Hereupon assembling the youth under his command, he marched to York, of which, when Colgrin had intelligence, he met with a very great army, composed of Saxons, Scots, and Picts, by the river Duglas, where a battle happened, with the loss of the greater part of both armies. Notwithstanding, the victory fell to Arthur, who pursued Colgrin to York, and there besieged him.

Dubricius's Speech against the Treacherous Saxons, of whom Arthur Slays Many in Battle

When he had done speaking, St. Dubricius, Archbishop of Legions, going to the top of a hill, cried out with a loud voice, "You that have the honor to profess the Christian faith, keep fixed in your minds the love which you owe to your country and fellow subjects, whose sufferings by the treachery of the Pagans will be an everlasting reproach to you if you do not courageously defend them. It is your country which you fight for, and for which you should, when required, voluntarily suffer death; for that itself is victory and the cure of the soul. For he that shall die for his brethren, offers himself a living sacrifice to God, and has Christ for his example, who condescended to lay down his life for his brethren. If, therefore, any of you shall be killed in this war, that death itself, which is suffered in so glorious a cause, shall be to him for penance and absolution of all his sins." At these words, all of them, encouraged with the benediction of the holy prelate, instantly armed themselves. . . . Upon [Arthur's shield] the picture of the blessed Mary, Mother of God, was painted, in order to put him frequently in mind of her. . . . In this manner was a great part of that day also spent; whereupon Arthur, provoked to see the little advantage he had yet gained, and that victory still continued in suspense, drew out his Caliburn [Excalibur, Tennyson], and calling upon the name of the blessed Virgin, rushed forward with great fury into the thickest of the enemy's ranks; of whom (such was the merit of his prayers) not one escaped alive that felt the fury of his sword; neither did he give over the fury of his assault until he had, with his Caliburn alone, killed four hundred and seventy men. The Britons, seeing this, followed their leader in great multitudes, and made slaughter on all sides; so that Colgrin and Baldulph, his brother, and many thousands more, fell before them. But Cheldric, in his imminent danger of his men, betook himself to flight.

ARTHUR INCREASES HIS DOMINIONS

AFTER this, having invited over to him all persons whatsoever that were famous for valor in foreign nations, he began to augment the number of his domestics, and introduced such politeness into his court as people of the remotest countries thought worthy of their imitation. So that there was not a nobleman who thought himself of any consideration unless his clothes and arms were made in the same fashion as those of Arthur's knights. At length the fame of his munificence and valor spreading over the whole world, he became a terror to the kings of other countries, who grievously feared the loss of their dominions if he should make any attempt upon them. . . . Arthur formed a design for the conquest of all Europe. . . . At the end of nine years, in which time all the parts of Gaul were entirely reduced, Arthur returned back to Paris, where he kept his court, and calling an assembly of the clergy and people, established peace and the just administration of the laws in that kingdom. Then he bestowed Neustria, now called Normandy, upon Bedoer, his butler; the province of Andegavia upon Caius, his sewer; and several other provinces upon his great men that attended him. Thus, having settled the peace of the cities and the countries there, he returned back in the beginning of spring to Britain.

ARTHUR HOLDS A SOLEMN FESTIVAL

UPON the approach of the feast of Pentecost, Arthur, the better to demonstrate his joy after such triumphant success, and for the more solemn observation of that festival, and reconciling the minds of the princes that were now subject to him, resolved, during that season, to hold a magnificent court, to place the crown upon his head, and to invite all the kings and dukes under his subjection to the solemnity. And when he had communicated his design to his familiar friends, he pitched upon the city of Legions as a proper place for his purpose. For besides its great wealth above the other cities, its situation, which was in Glamorganshire, upon the River Uske, near the Severn Sea, was most pleasant and fit for so great a solemnity; for on one side it was washed by that noble river, so that the kings and princes from the countries beyond the seas might have the convenience of sailing up to it. On the other side, the beauty of the meadows and groves, and magnificence of the royal palaces, with lofty, gilded roofs that adorned it, made it even rival the grandeur of Rome. It was also famous for two churches: whereof one was built in honor of the martyr Julius, and adorned with a choir of virgins, who had devoted themselves wholly to the service of God; but the other, which was founded in memory of St. Aaron, his companion, and maintained a convent of canons, was the third metropolitan church of Britain. Besides, there was a college of two hundred philosophers, who, being learned in astronomy and the other arts, were diligent in observing the courses of the stars, and gave Arthur true predictions of the events that would happen at that time. In this place, therefore, which afforded such delights, were preparations made for the ensuing festival. Ambassadors were sent into several kingdoms to invite to court the princes both of Gaul and all the adjacent islands . . . who came with such a train of mules, horses, and rich furniture as it is difficult to describe. Besides these, there remained no prince of any consideration on this side of Spain, who came not upon this invitation. And no wonder, when Arthur's munificence, which was celebrated over the whole world, made him beloved by all people.

When all these were assembled together in the city, upon the day of the solemnity, the archbishops were conducted to the palace, in order to place the crown upon the king's head. Therefore Dubricius, inasmuch as the court was kept in his diocese, made himself ready to celebrate the office, and undertook the ordering of whatever related to it. As soon as the king was invested with his royal habiliments, he was conducted in great pomp to the metropolitan church, supported on each side by two archbishops, and having four kings, viz., of Albania, Cornwall, Demetia, and Venedotia, whose right it was, bearing four golden swords before him. He was also attended with a concert of all sorts of music, which made most excellent harmony. On another part was the queen, dressed out in her richest ornaments, conducted by the archbishops and bishops to the Temple of Virgins; the four queens also of the kings last mentioned, bearing before her four white doves, according to ancient custom; and after her there followed a retinue of women, making all imaginable demonstrations of joy. When the whole procession was ended, so transporting was the harmony of the musical instruments and voices, whereof there was a vast variety in both churches, that the knights who attended were in doubt which to prefer, and therefore crowded from the one to the other by turns, and were far from being tired with the solemnity, though the whole day had been spent in it. At last, when divine service was over at both churches, the king and queen put off their crowns, and putting on their lighter ornaments, went to the banquet, he to one palace with the men, she to another with the women. For the Britons still observed the ancient custom of Troy, by which the men and women used to celebrate their festivals apart. When they had all taken their seats according to precedence, Caius, the sewer, in rich robes of ermine, with a thousand young noblemen, all in like manner clothed with ermine, served up the dishes. From another part, Bedoer, the butler, was followed with the same number of attendants, in various habits, who waited with all kinds of cups and drinking vessels. In the queen's palace were innumerable waiters, dressed with variety of ornaments, all performing their respective offices; which, if I should describe particularly, I should draw out the history to a tedious length. For at that time Britain had arrived at such a pitch of grandeur, that in abundance of riches, luxury of ornaments, and politeness of inhabitants, it far surpassed all other kingdoms. The knights in it that were famous for feats of chivalry wore their clothes and arms all of the same color and fashion: and the women also, no less celebrated for their wit, wore all the same kind of apparel; and esteemed none worthy of their love but such as had given a proof of their valor in three several battles. Thus was the valor of the men an encouragement for the women's chastity, and the love of the women a spur to the soldiers' bravery.

After a Variety of Sports at the Coronation, Arthur Amply Rewards His Servants

As soon as the banquets were over they went into the fields without the city to divert themselves with various sports. The military men composed a kind of diversion in imitation of a fight on horseback; and the ladies, placed on the top of the walls as spectators, in a sportive manner darted their amorous glances at the courtiers, the more to encourage them. Others spent the remainder of the day in other diversions, such as shooting with bows and arrows, tossing the pike, casting of heavy stones and rocks, playing at dice and the like, and all these inoffensively and without quarreling. Whoever gained the victory in any of these sports was awarded with a rich prize by Arthur. In this manner were the first three days spent; and on the fourth, all who, upon account of their titles, bore any kind of office at this solemnity, were called together to receive honors and preferments in reward of their services, and to fill up the vacancies in the governments of cities and castles, archbishoprics, bishoprics, abbeys, and other hosts of honor.

ARTHUR COMMITS TO HIS NEPHEW MODRED THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITAIN, AND ENGAGES IN A WAR WITH ROME

AT THE beginning of the following summer, as he was on his march toward Rome and was beginning to pass the Alps, he had news brought him that his nephew Modred, to whose care he had intrusted Britain, had, by tyrannical and treasonable practices, set the crown upon his own head. [Book xi., Chapters i. and ii.] His [Modred's] whole army, taking Pagans and Christians together, amounted to eighty thousand men, with the help of whom he met Arthur just after his landing at the port of Rutupi, and joining battle with him, made a very great slaughter of his men. . . . After they had at last, with much difficulty, got ashore, they paid back the slaughter, and put Modred and his army to flight. For by long practice in war they had learned an excellent way of ordering their forces; which was so managed that while their foot were employed either in an assault or upon the defensive, the horse would come in at full speed obliquely, break through the enemy's ranks, and so force them to flee. Nevertheless, this perjured usurper got his forces together again, and the night following entered Winchester. As soon as Queen Guanhumara [Guinevere] heard this, she immediately, despairing of success, fled from York to the City of Legions, where she resolved to lead a chaste life among the nuns in the church of Julius the Martyr, and entered herself one of their order. . . .

In the battle that followed thereupon, great numbers lost their lives on both sides. . . . In this assault fell the wicked traitor himself, and many thousands with him. But notwithstanding the loss of him, the rest did not flee, but running together from all parts of the field, maintained their ground with undaunted courage. The fight now grew more furious than ever, and proved fatal to almost all the commanders and their forces. . . . And even the renowned King Arthur himself was mortally wounded;

and being carried thence to the isle of Avallon to be cured of his wounds, he gave up the crown of Britain to his kinsman Constantine, the son of Cador, Duke of Cornwall, in the five hundred and forty-second year of our Lord's incarnation.

THE HOLY GRAIL

From Malory's ‹Morte d'Arthur›

«FAIRE knight,» said the King, «what is your name? I require you of your knighthood to tell me.»

«Sir,» said Sir Launcelot, «wit ye well, my name is Sir Launcelot du Lake.»

«And my name is Sir Pelles, king of the forrain countrey, and nigh cousin unto Joseph of Arithmy» [Arimathea].

Then either of them made much of the other, and so they went into the castle for to take their repast. And anon there came in a dove at the window, and in her bill there seemed a little censer of gold, and therewithal there was such a savor as though all the spicery of the world had been there; and forthwithal there was upon the table all manner of meates and drinkes that they could thinke upon. So there came a damosell, passing faire and young, and she beare a vessell of gold between her hands, and thereto the king kneeled devoutly and said his prayers, and so did all that were there.

«O Jesu,» said Sir Launcelot, «what may this meane?»

«This is,» said King Pelles, «the richest thing that any man hath living; and when this thing goeth about, the round table shall bee broken. And wit ye well,» said King Pelles, «that this is the holy sancgreall which ye have heere seene.»

So King Pelles and Sir Launcelot led their lives the most part of that day.

PETER CHRISTEN ASBJÖRNSEN

(1812–1885)

Asbjörnsen was born January 15th, 1812, at Christiania, Norway. He entered the University in 1833, but was presently obliged to take the position of tutor with a family in Romerike. Four years later he came back to the University, where he studied medicine, but also and particularly zoölogy and botany, subjects which he subsequently taught in various schools. During his life among the country people he had begun to collect folk-tales and legends, and afterward, on long foot-tours undertaken in the pursuit of his favorite studies, he added to this store. In co-operation with his lifelong friend, Jörgen Moe, subsequently Bishop of Christiansand, he published in 1838 a first collection of folk-stories. In later years his study of folk-lore went on side by side with his study of zoölogy. At various times, from 1846 to 1853, he received stipends from the Christiania University to enable him to pursue zoölogical investigations at points along the Norwegian coast. In addition to these journeys he had traversed Norway in every direction, partly to observe the condition of the forests of the country, and partly to collect the popular legends, which seem always to have been in his mind.

From 1856 to 1858 he studied forestry at Tharand, and in 1860 was made head forester of the district of Trondhjem, in the north of Norway. He retained this position until 1864, when he was sent by the government to Holland, Germany, and Denmark, to investigate the turf industry. On his return he was made the head of a commission whose purpose was to better the turf production of the country, from which position he was finally released with a pension in 1876. He died in 1885.

Asbjörnsen's principal literary work was in the direction of the folk-tales of Norway, although the list of his writings on natural history, popular and scientific, is a long one. As a scientist he made several important discoveries in deep-sea soundings, which gave him, at home and abroad, a wide reputation, but the significance of his work as a collector of folk-lore has in a great measure overshadowed this phase of his activity. His greatest works are—‘Norske Folkeeventyr’ (Norwegian Folk Tales), in collaboration with Moe, which appeared in 1842–44, and subsequently in many editions; ‘Norske Huldre-eventyr og Folkesagn’ (Norwegian Fairy Tales and Folk Legends) in 1845. In the stories published by Asbjörnsen alone, he has not confined himself simply to the reproduction of the tales in their popular form, but has retold them with an admirable setting of the characteristics of the life of the people in their particular environment. He was a rare lover of nature, and there are many exquisite bits of natural description.

Asbjörnsen's literary power was of no mean merit, and his work not only found immediate acceptance in his own country, but has been widely translated into the other languages of Europe. Norwegian literature in particular owes him a debt of gratitude, for he was the first to point out the direction of the subsequent national development.

GUDBRAND OF THE MOUNTAIN-SIDE

THERE was once a man named Gudbrand, who had a farm which lay on the side of a mountain, whence he was called Gudbrand of the Mountain-side. He and his wife lived in such harmony together, and were so well matched, that whatever the husband did, seemed to the wife so well done that it could not be done better; let him therefore act as he might, she was equally well pleased.

They owned a plot of ground, and had a hundred dollars lying at the bottom of a chest, and in the stall two fine cows. One day the woman said to Gudbrand:—

«I think we might as well drive one of the cows to town, and sell it; we should then have a little pocket-money: for such respectable persons as we are ought to have a few shillings in hand as well as others. The hundred dollars at the bottom of the chest we had better not touch; but I do not see why we should keep more than one cow: besides, we shall be somewhat the gainers; for instead of two cows, I shall have only one to milk and look after.»

These words Gudbrand thought both just and reasonable; so he took the cow and went to the town in order to sell it: but when he came there, he could not find any one who wanted to buy a cow.

«Well!» thought Gudbrand, «I can go home again with my cow: I have both stall and collar for her, and it is no farther to go backwards than forwards.» So saying, he began wandering home again.

When he had gone a little way, he met a man who had a horse he wished to sell, and Gudbrand thought it better to have a horse than a cow, so he exchanged with the man. Going a little further still, he met a man driving a fat pig before him; and thinking it better to have a fat pig than a horse, he made an exchange with him also. A little further on he met a man with a goat. «A goat,» thought he, «is always better to have than a pig;» so he made an exchange with the owner of the goat. He now walked on for an hour, when he met a man with a sheep; with him he exchanged his goat: «for,» thought he, «it is always better to have a sheep than a goat.» After walking some way again, meeting a man with a goose, he changed away the sheep for the goose; then going on a long way, he met a man with a cock, and thought to himself, «It is better to have a cock than a goose,» and so gave his goose for the cock. Having walked on till the day was far gone, and beginning to feel hungry, he sold the cock for twelve shillings, and bought some food; «for,» thought he, «it is better to support life than to carry back the cock.» After this he continued his way homeward till he reached the house of his nearest neighbor, where he called in.

«How have matters gone with you in town?» asked the neighbor.

«Oh,» answered Gudbrand, «but so-so; I cannot boast of my luck, neither can I exactly complain of it.» He then began to relate all that he had done from first to last.

«You'll meet with a warm reception when you get home to your wife,» said his neighbor. «God help you, I would not be in your place.»

«I think things might have been much worse,» said Gudbrand; «but whether they are good or bad, I have such a gentle wife that she will never say a word, let me do what I may.»

«Yes, that I know,» answered his neighbor; «but I do not think she will be so gentle in this instance.»

«Shall we lay a wager?» said Gudbrand of the Mountain-side. «I have got a hundred dollars in my chest at home; will you venture the like sum?»

«Yes, I will,» replied the neighbor, and they wagered accordingly, and remained till evening drew on, when they set out together for Gudbrand's house; having agreed that the neighbor should stand outside and listen, while Gudbrand went in to meet his wife.

«Good-evening,» said Gudbrand.

«Good-evening,» said his wife, «thank God thou art there.»

Yes, there he was. His wife then began asking him how he had fared in the town.

«So-so,» said Gudbrand: «I have not much to boast of; for when I reached the town there was no one who would buy the cow, so I changed it for a horse.»

«Many thanks for that,» said his wife: «we are such respectable people that we ought to ride to church as well as others; and if we can afford to keep a horse, we may certainly have one. Go and put the horse in the stable, children.»

«Oh,» said Gudbrand, «but I have not got the horse; for as I went along the road, I exchanged the horse for a pig.»

«Well,» said the woman, «that is just what I should have done myself; I thank thee for that. I can now have pork and bacon in my house to offer anybody when they come to see us. What should we have done with a horse? People would only have said we were grown too proud to walk to church. Go, children, and put the pig in.»

«But I have not brought the pig with me,» exclaimed Gudbrand; «for when I had gone a little further on, I exchanged it for a milch goat.»

«How admirably thou dost everything,» exclaimed his wife. «What should we have done with a pig? People would only have said that we eat everything we own. Yes, now that I have a goat, I can get both milk and cheese, and still keep my goat. Go and tie the goat, children.»

«No,» said Gudbrand, «I have not brought home the goat; for when I came a little further on, I changed the goat for a fine sheep.»

«Well,» cried the woman, «thou hast done everything just as I could wish; just as if I had been there myself. What should we have done with a goat? I must have climbed up the mountains and wandered through the valleys to bring it home in the evening. With a sheep I should have wool and clothing in the house, with food into the bargain. So go, children, and put the sheep into the field.»

«But I have not got the sheep,» said Gudbrand, «for as I went a little further, I changed it away for a goose.»

«Many, many thanks for that,» said his wife. «What should I have done with a sheep? For I have neither a spinning-wheel nor have I much desire to toil and labor to make clothes; we can purchase clothing as we have hitherto: now I shall have roast goose, which I have often longed for; and then I can make a little pillow of the feathers. Go and bring in the goose, children."

"But I have not got the goose," said Gudbrand; "as I came on a little further, I changed it away for a cock."

"Heaven only knows how thou couldst think of all this," exclaimed his wife, "it is just as if I had managed it all myself. A cock! that is just as good as if thou hadst bought an eight-day clock; for as the cock crows every morning at four o'clock, we can be stirring betimes. What should I have done with a goose? I do not know how to dress a goose, and my pillow I can stuff with moss. Go and fetch in the cock, children."

"But I have not brought the cock home with me," said Gudbrand; "for when I had gone a long, long way, I became so hungry that I was obliged to sell the cock for twelve shillings to keep me alive."

"Well! thank God thou always dost just as I could wish to have it done. What should we have done with a cock? We are our own masters; we can lie as long as we like in the morning. God be praised, I have got thee here safe again, and as thou always dost everything so right, we want neither a cock, nor a goose, nor a pig, nor a sheep, nor a cow."

Hereupon Gudbrand opened the door:—"Have I won your hundred dollars?" asked he of the neighbor, who was obliged to confess that he had.

Translation by Benjamin Thorpe in 'Yule-Tide Stories' (Bohn's Library).

THE WIDOW'S SON

There was once a very poor woman who had only one son. She toiled for him till he was old enough to be confirmed by the priest, when she told him that she could support him no longer, but that he must go out in the world and gain his own livelihood. So the youth set out, and after wandering about for a day or two he met a stranger. "Whither art thou going?" asked the man. "I am going out in the world to see if I can get employment," answered the youth.—"Wilt thou serve us?"—"Yes, just as well serve you as anybody else," answered the youth. "Thou shalt be well cared for with me," said the man: "thou shalt be my companion, and do little or nothing besides."

So the youth resided with him, had plenty to eat and drink, and very little or nothing to do; but he never saw a living person in the man's house.

One day his master said to him:—«I am going to travel, and shall be absent eight days. During that time thou wilt be here alone: but thou must not go into either of these four rooms; if thou dost, I will kill thee when I return.» The youth answered that he would not. When the man had gone away three or four days, the youth could no longer refrain, but went into one of the rooms. He looked around, but saw nothing except a shelf over the door, with a whip made of briar on it. «This was well worth forbidding me so strictly from seeing,» thought the youth. When the eight days had passed the man came home again. «Thou hast not, I hope, been into any of my rooms,» said he. «No, I have not,» answered the youth. «That I shall soon be able to see,» said the man, going into the room the youth had entered. «But thou hast been in,» said he, «and now thou shalt die.» The youth cried and entreated to be forgiven, so that he escaped with his life but had a severe beating; when that was over, they were as good friends as before.

Some time after this, the man took another journey. This time he would be away a fortnight, but first forbade the youth again from going into any of the rooms he had not already been in; but the one he had previously entered he might enter again. This time all took place just as before, the only difference being that the youth abstained for eight days before he entered the forbidden rooms. In one apartment he found only a shelf over the door, on which lay a huge stone and a water-bottle. «This is also something to be in such fear about,» thought the youth again. When the man came home, he asked whether he had been in any of the rooms. «No, he had not,» was the answer. «I shall soon see,» said the man; and when he found that the youth had nevertheless been in, he said, «Now I will no longer spare thee, thou shalt die.» But the youth cried and implored that his life might be spared, and thus again escaped with a beating; but this time got as much as could be laid on him. When he had recovered from the effect of this beating he lived as well as ever, and he and the man were as good friends as before.

Some time after this, the man again made a journey, and now he was to be three weeks absent. He warned the youth anew not to enter the third room; if he did he must at once prepare to die. At the end of a fortnight, the youth had no longer any command over himself, and stole in; but here he saw nothing save a trap-door in the floor. He lifted it up and looked through; there stood a large copper kettle, that boiled and boiled, yet he could see no fire under it. «I should like to know if it is hot,» thought the youth, dipping his finger down into it; but when he drew it up again he found that all his finger was gilt. He scraped and washed it, but the gilding was not to be removed; so he tied a rag over it, and when the man returned and asked him what was the matter with his finger, he answered he had cut it badly. But the man, tearing the rag off, at once saw what ailed the finger. At first he was going to kill the youth, but as he cried and begged again, he merely beat him so that he was obliged to lie in bed for three days. The man then took a pot down from the wall and rubbed him with what it contained, so that the youth was as well as before.

After some time the man made another journey, and said he should not return for a month. He then told the youth that if he went into the fourth room, he must not think for a moment that his life would be spared. One, two, even three weeks the youth refrained from entering the forbidden room; but then, having no longer any command over himself, he stole in. There stood a large black horse in a stall, with a trough of burning embers at its head and a basket of hay at its tail. The youth thought this was cruel, and therefore changed their position, putting the basket of hay by the horse's head. The horse thereupon said:—

«As you have so kind a disposition that you enable me to get food, I will save you: should the Troll return and find you here, he will kill you. Now you must go up into the chamber above this, and take one of the suits of armor that hang there: but on no account take one that is bright; on the contrary, select the most rusty you can see, and take that; choose also a sword and saddle in like manner.»

The youth did so, but he found the whole very heavy for him to carry. When he came back, the horse said that now he should strip and wash himself well in the kettle, which stood boiling in the next apartment. «I feel afraid,» thought the youth, but nevertheless did so. When he had washed himself, he became comely and plump, and as red and white as milk and blood, and much stronger than before. «Are you sensible of any change?» asked the horse. «Yes,» answered the youth. «Try to lift me,» said the horse. Aye, that he could, and brandished the sword with ease. «Now lay the saddle on me,» said the horse, «put on the armor and take the whip of thorn, the stone and the water-flask, and the pot with ointment, and then we will set out.»

When the youth had mounted the horse, it started off at a rapid rate. After riding some time, the horse said, «I think I hear a noise. Look round: can you see anything?» «A great many men are coming after us,—certainly a score at least,» answered the youth. «Ah! that is the Troll,» said the horse, «he is coming with all his companions.»

They traveled for a time, until their pursuers were gaining on them. «Throw now the thorn whip over your shoulder,» said the horse, «but throw it far away from me.»

The youth did so, and at the same moment there sprang up a large thick wood of briars. The youth now rode on a long way, while the Troll was obliged to go home for something wherewith to hew a road through the wood. After some time the horse again said, «Look back: can you see anything now?» «Yes, a whole multitude of people,» said the youth, «like a church congregation.»—«That is the Troll; now he has got more with him; throw out now the large stone, but throw it far from me.»

When the youth had done what the horse desired, there arose a large stone mountain behind them. So the Troll was obliged to go home after something with which to bore through the mountain; and while he was thus employed, the youth rode on a considerable way. But now the horse again bade him look back: he then saw a multitude like a whole army; they were so bright that they glittered in the sun. «Well, that is the Troll with all his friends,» said the horse. «Now throw the water bottle behind you, but take good care to spill nothing on me!» The youth did so, but notwithstanding his caution he happened to spill a drop on the horse's loins. Immediately there rose a vast lake, and the spilling of the few drops caused the horse to stand far out in the water; nevertheless, he at last swam to the shore.

When the Trolls came to the water they lay down to drink it all up, and they gulped and gulped till they burst. «Now we are quit of them,» said the horse.

When they had traveled on a very long way they came to a green plain in a wood. «Take off your armor now,» said the horse, «and put on your rags only; lift my saddle off and hang everything up in that large hollow linden; make yourself then a wig of pine-moss, go to the royal palace which lies close by, and there ask for employment. When you desire to see me, come to this spot, shake the bridle, and I will instantly be with you.»

The youth did as the horse told him; and when he put on the moss wig he became so pale and miserable to look at that no one would have recognized him. On reaching the palace, he only asked if he might serve in the kitchen to carry wood and water to the cook; but the cook-maid asked him why he wore such an ugly wig? «Take it off,» said she: «I will not have anybody here so frightful.» «That I cannot,» answered the youth, «for I am not very clean in the head.» «Dost thou think then that I will have thee in the kitchen, if such be the case?» said she; «go to the master of the horse: thou art fittest to carry muck from the stables.» When the master of the horse told him to take off his wig, he got the same answer, so he refused to have him. «Thou canst go to the gardener,» said he, «thou art only fit to go and dig the ground.» The gardener allowed him to remain, but none of the servants would sleep with him, so he was obliged to sleep alone under the stairs of the summer-house, which stood upon pillars and had a high staircase, under which he laid a quantity of moss for a bed, and there lay as well as he could.

When he had been some time in the royal palace, it happened one morning, just at sunrise, that the youth had taken off his moss wig and was standing washing himself, and appeared so handsome it was a pleasure to look on him. The princess saw from her window this comely gardener, and thought she had never before seen any one so handsome.

She then asked the gardener why he lay out there under the stairs. «Because none of the other servants will lie with him,» answered the gardener. «Let him come this evening and lie by the door in my room,» said the princess: «they cannot refuse after that to let him sleep in the house.»

The gardener told this to the youth. «Dost thou think I will do so?» said he. «If I do so, all will say there is something between me and the princess.» «Thou hast reason, forsooth, to fear such a suspicion,» replied the gardener, «such a fine, comely lad as thou art.» «Well, if she has commanded it, I suppose I must comply," said the youth. In going up-stairs that evening he stamped and made such a noise that they were obliged to beg of him to go more gently, lest it might come to the king's knowledge. When within the chamber, he lay down and began immediately to snore. The princess then said to her waiting-maid, "Go gently and pull off his moss wig." Creeping softly toward him, she was about to snatch it, but he held it fast with both hands, and said she should not have it. He then lay down again and began to snore. The princess made a sign to the maid, and this time she snatched his wig off. There he lay so beautifully red and white, just as the princess had seen him in the morning sun. After this the youth slept every night in the princess's chamber.

But it was not long before the king heard that the garden lad slept every night in the princess's chamber, at which he became so angry that he almost resolved on putting him to death. This, however, he did not do, but cast him into prison, and his daughter he confined to her room, not allowing her to go out, either by day or night. Her tears and prayers for herself and the youth were unheeded by the king, who only became the more incensed against her.

Some time after this, there arose a war and disturbance in the country, and the king was obliged to take arms and defend himself against another king, who threatened to deprive him of his throne. When the youth heard this he begged the jailer would go to the king for him, and propose to let him have armor and a sword, and allow him to follow to the war. All the courtiers laughed when the jailer made known his errand to the king. They begged he might have some old trumpery for armor, that they might enjoy the sport of seeing the poor creature in the war. He got the armor and also an old jade of a horse, which limped on three legs, dragging the fourth after it.

Thus they all marched forth against the enemy, but they had not gone far from the royal palace before the youth stuck fast with his old jade in a swamp. Here he sat beating and calling to the jade, "Hie! wilt thou go? hie! wilt thou go?" This amused all the others, who laughed and jeered as they passed. But no sooner were they all gone than, running to the linden, he put on his own armor and shook the bridle, and immediately the horse appeared, and said, "Do thou do thy best and I will do mine."

When the youth arrived on the field the battle had already begun, and the king was hard pressed; but just at that moment the youth put the enemy to flight. The king and his attendants wondered who it could be that came to their help; but no one had been near enough to speak to him, and when the battle was over he was away. When they returned, the youth was still sitting fast in the swamp, beating and calling to his three-legged jade. They laughed as they passed, and said, «Only look, yonder sits the fool yet.»

The next day when they marched out the youth was still sitting there, and they again laughed and jeered at him; but no sooner had they all passed by than he ran again to the linden, and everything took place as on the previous day. Every one wondered who the stranger warrior was who had fought for them; but no one approached him so near that he could speak to him: of course no one ever imagined that it was the youth.

When they returned in the evening and saw him and his old jade still sticking fast in the swamp, they again made a jest of him; one shot an arrow at him and wounded him in the leg, and he began to cry and moan so that it was sad to hear, whereupon the king threw him his handkerchief that he might bind it about his leg. When they marched forth the third morning there sat the youth calling to his horse, «Hie! wilt thou go? hie! wilt thou go?» «No, no! he will stay there till he starves,» said the king's men as they passed by, and laughed so heartily at him that they nearly fell from their horses. When they had all passed, he again ran to the linden, and came to the battle just at the right moment. That day he killed the enemy's king, and thus the war was at an end.

When the fighting was over, the king observed his handkerchief tied round the leg of the strange warrior, and by this he easily knew him. They received him with great joy, and carried him with them up to the royal palace, and the princess, who saw them from her window, was so delighted no one could tell. «There comes my beloved also,» said she. He then took the pot of ointment and rubbed his leg, and afterward all the wounded, so that they were all well again in a moment.

After this the king gave him the princess to wife. On the day of his marriage he went down into the stable to see the horse, and found him dull, hanging his ears and refusing to eat. When the young king—for he was now king, having obtained the half of the realm — spoke to him and asked him what he wanted, the horse said, « I have now helped thee forward in the world, and I will live no longer: thou must take thy sword, and cut my head off.» «No, that I will not do,» said the young king: «thou shalt have whatever thou wilt, and always live without working.» «If thou wilt not do as I say,» answered the horse, «I shall find a way of killing thee.»

The king was then obliged to slay him; but when he raised the sword to give the stroke he was so distressed that he turned his face away; but no sooner had he struck his head off than there stood before him a handsome prince in the place of the horse.

«Whence in the name of Heaven didst thou come?» asked the king. «It was I who was the horse,» answered the prince. «Formerly I was king of the country whose sovereign you slew yesterday; it was he who cast over me a horse's semblance, and sold me to the Troll. As he is killed, I shall recover my kingdom, and you and I shall be neighboring kings; but we will never go to war with each other.»

Neither did they; they were friends as long as they lived, and the one came often to visit the other.

ROGER ASCHAM

(1515–1568)

This noted scholar owes his place in English literature to his pure, vigorous English prose. John Tindal and Sir Thomas More, his predecessors, had perhaps equaled him in the flexible and simple use of his native tongue, but they had not surpassed him. The usage of the time was still to write works of importance in Latin, and Ascham was master of a good Ciceronian Latin style. It is to his credit that he urged on his countrymen the writing of English, and set them an example of its vigorous use.

He was the son of John Ascham, house steward to Lord Scrope of Bolton, and was born at Kirby Wiske, near Northallerton, in 1515. At the age of fifteen he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, where he applied himself to Greek and Latin, mathematics, music, and penmanship. He had great success in teaching and improving the study of the classics; but seems to have had a somewhat checkered academic career, both as student and teacher. His poverty was excessive, and he made many unsuccessful attempts to secure patronage and position; till at length, in 1545, he published his famous treatise on Archery, 'Toxophilus,' which he presented to Henry VIII. in the picture gallery at Greenwich, and which obtained for him a small pension. The treatise is in the form of a dialogue, the first part being an argument in favor of archery, and the second, instructions for its practice. In its pages he makes a plea for the literary use of the English tongue.

After long-continued disappointment and trouble, he was finally successful in obtaining the position of tutor to the Princess Elizabeth, in 1548. She was fifteen years old, and he found her an apt scholar; but the life was irksome, and in 1550 he resigned the post to return to Cambridge as public orator, — whence one may guess as a main reason for so excellent a teacher having so hard a time to live, that like many others he liked to talk about his profession better than to practice it. Going abroad shortly afterward as secretary to Sir Richard Morysin, ambassador to Charles V., he remained with him until 1553, when he received the appointment of Latin secretary to Queen Mary. It is said that he wrote for her forty-seven letters in his fine Latin style, in three days.

ROGER ASCHAM

At the accession of Elizabeth he received the office of the Queen's private tutor. Poverty and «household griefs» still gave him anxiety; but during the five years which elapsed between 1563 and his death in 1568, he found some comfort in the composition of his 'Schoolmaster,' which was published by his widow in 1570. It was suggested by a conversation at Windsor with Sir William Cecil, on the proper method of bringing up children. Sir Richard Sackville was so well pleased with Ascham's theories that he, with others, entreated him to write a practical work on the subject. 'The Schoolmaster' argues in favor of gentleness rather than force on the part of an instructor. Then he commends his own method of teaching Latin by double translation, offers remarks on Latin prosody, and touches on other pedagogic themes. Both this and the 'Toxophilus' show a pure, straightforward, easy style. Contemporary testimony to its beauty may be found in an appendix to Mayor's edition of 'The Schoolmaster' (1863); though Dr. Johnson, in a memoir prefixed to Bennet's collected edition of Ascham's English works (1771), says that «he was scarcely known as an author in his own language till Mr. Upton published his 'Schoolmaster' in 1711.» He has remained, however, the best known type of a great teacher in the popular memory; in part, perhaps, through his great pupil.

The best collected edition of his works, including his Latin letters, was published by Dr. Giles in 1864-5. There is an authoritative edition of the 'Schoolmaster' in the Arber Series of old English reprints. The best account of his system of education is in R. H. Quick's 'Essays on Educational Reformers' (1868).

ON GENTLENESS IN EDUCATION

From 'The Schoolmaster'

YET some will say that children, of nature, love pastime, and mislike learning; because, in their kind, the one is easy and pleasant, the other hard and wearisome. Which is an opinion not so true as some men ween. For the matter lieth not so much in the disposition of them that be young, as in the order and manner of bringing up by them that be old; nor yet in the difference of learning and pastime. For, beat a child if he dance not well, and cherish him though he learn not well, you shall have him unwilling to go to dance, and glad to go to his book; knock him always when he draweth his shaft ill, and favor him again though he fault at his book, you shall have him very loth to be in the field, and very willing to be in the school. Yea, I say more, and not of myself, but by the judgment of those from whom few wise men will gladly dissent; that if ever the nature of man be given at any time, more than other, to receive goodness, it is in innocency of young years, before that experience of evil have taken root in him. For the pure clean wit of a sweet young babe is like the newest wax, most able to receive the best and fairest printing; and like a new bright silver dish never occupied, to receive and keep clean any good thing that is put into it.

And thus, will in children, wisely wrought withal, may easily be won to be very well willing to learn. And wit in children, by nature, namely memory, the only key and keeper of all learning, is readiest to receive and surest to keep any manner of thing that is learned in youth. This, lewd and learned, by common experience, know to be most true. For we remember nothing so well when we be old as those things which we learned when we were young. And this is not strange, but common in all nature's works: « Every man seeth (as I said before) new wax is best for printing, new clay fittest for working, new-shorn wool aptest for soon and surest dyeing, new fresh flesh for good and durable salting. » And this similitude is not rude, nor borrowed of the larder-house, but out of his school-house, of whom the wisest of England need not be ashamed to learn. « Young grafts grow not only soonest, but also fairest, and bring always forth the best and sweetest fruit; young whelps learn easily to carry; young popinjays learn quickly to speak. » And so, to be short, if in all other things, though they lack reason, sense, and life, the similitude of youth is fittest to all goodness, surely nature in mankind is most beneficial and effectual in their behalf.

Therefore, if to the goodness of nature be joined the wisdom of the teacher, in leading young wits into a right and plain way of learning; surely children kept up in God's fear, and governed by His grace, may most easily be brought well to serve God and their country, both by virtue and wisdom.

But if will and wit, by farther age, be once allured from innocency, delighted in vain sights, filled with foul talk, crooked with wilfulness, hardened with stubbornness, and let loose to disobedience; surely it is hard with gentleness, but impossible with severe cruelty, to call them back to good frame again. For where the one perchance may bend it, the other shall surely break it: and so, instead of some hope, leave an assured desperation, and shameless contempt of all goodness; the furthest point in all mischief, as Xenophon doth most truly and most wittily mark.

Therefore, to love or to hate, to like or contemn, to ply this way or that way to good or to bad, ye shall have as ye use a child in his youth.

And one example whether love or fear doth work more in a child for virtue and learning, I will gladly report; which may be heard with some pleasure, and followed with more profit.

Before I went into Germany, I came to Broadgate in Leicestershire, to take my leave of that noble lady, Jane Grey, to whom I was exceeding much beholding. Her parents, the duke and duchess, with all the household, gentlemen and gentlewomen, were hunting in the park. I found her in her chamber, reading Phædo Platonis in Greek, and that with as much delight as some gentlemen would read a merry tale in Boccace. After salutation and duty done, with some other talk, I asked her why she would leese [lose] such pastime in the park? Smiling she answered me: "Iwisse, all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure that I find in Plato. Alas! good folk, they never felt what true pleasure meant." "And how came you, madame," quoth I, "to this deep knowledge of pleasure? and what did chiefly allure you unto it, seeing not many women, but very few men, have attained thereunto?" "I will tell you," quoth she, "and tell you a truth, which perchance ye will marvel at. One of the greatest benefits that ever God gave me, is, that he sent me so sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go, eat, drink, be merry, or sad, be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else, I must do it, as it were, in such weight, measure, and number, even so perfectly, as God made the world; or else I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, yea, presently, sometimes with pinches, nips, and bobs, and other ways which I will not name, for the honor I bear them, so without measure misordered, that I think myself in hell, till time come that I must go to Mr. Elmer; who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing whiles I am with him. And when I am called from him, I fall on weeping, because whatsoever I do else but learning, is full of grief, trouble, fear, and whole misliking unto me. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more pleasure and more, that in respect of it, all other pleasures, in very deed, be but trifles and troubles unto me."

I remember this talk gladly, both because it is so worthy of memory, and because also it was the last talk that ever I had, and the last time that ever I saw that noble and worthy lady.

ON STUDY AND EXERCISE

From 'Toxophilus'

PHILOLOGE—But now to our shooting, Toxophile, again; wherein I suppose you cannot say so much for shooting to be fit for learning, as you have spoken against music for the same. Therefore, as concerning music, I can be content to grant you your mind; but as for shooting, surely I suppose that you cannot persuade me, by no means, that a man can be earnest in it, and earnest at his book too; but rather I think that a man with a bow on his back, and shafts under his girdle, is more fit to wait upon Robin Hood than upon Apollo or the Muses.

Toxophile—Over-earnest shooting surely I will not over-earnestly defend; for I ever thought shooting should be a waiter upon learning, not a mistress over learning. Yet this I marvel not a little at, that ye think a man with a bow on his back is more like Robin Hood's servant than Apollo's, seeing that Apollo himself, in Alcestis of Euripides, which tragedy you read openly not long ago, in a manner glorieth, saying this verse:—

"It is my wont always my bow with me to bear."

Therefore a learned man ought not too much to be ashamed to bear that sometime, which Apollo, god of learning, himself was not ashamed always to bear. And because ye would have a man wait upon the Muses, and not at all meddle with shooting: I marvel that you do not remember how that the nine Muses their self, as soon as they were born, were put to nurse to a lady called Euphemis, which had a son named Erotus, with whom the nine Muses for his excellent shooting kept evermore company withal, and used daily to shoot together in the Mount Parnassus; and at last it chanced this Erotus to die, whose death the Muses lamented greatly, and fell all upon their knees afore Jupiter their father; and at their request, Erotus, for shooting with the Muses on earth, was made a sign and called Sagittarius in heaven. Therefore you see that if Apollo and the Muses either were examples indeed, or only feigned of wise men to be examples of learning, honest shooting may well enough be companion with honest study.

Philologe—Well, Toxophile, if you have no stronger defense of shooting than poets, I fear if your companions which love shooting heard you, they would think you made it but a trifling and fabling matter, rather than any other man that loveth not shooting could be persuaded by this reason to love it.

Toxophile—Even as I am not so fond but I know that these be fables, so I am sure you be not so ignorant but you know what such noble wits as the poets had, meant by such matters; which oftentimes, under the covering of a fable, do hide and wrap in goodly precepts of philosophy, with the true judgment of things. Which to be true, specially in Homer and Euripides, Plato, Aristotle, and Galen plainly do show; when through all their works (in a manner) they determine all controversies by these two poets and such like authorities. Therefore, if in this matter I seem to fable and nothing prove, I am content you judge so on me, seeing the same judgment shall condemn with me Plato, Aristotle, and Galen, whom in that error I am well content to follow. If these old examples prove nothing for shooting, what say you to this, that the best learned and sagest men in this realm which be now alive, both love shooting and use shooting, as the best learned bishops that be? amongst whom, Philologe, you yourself know four or five. which, as in all good learning, virtue, and sageness, they give other men example what thing they should do, even so by their shooting they plainly show what honest pastime other men given to learning may honestly use. That earnest study must be recreated with honest pastime, sufficiently I have proved afore, both by reason and authority of the best learned men that ever wrote. Then seeing pastimes be leful [lawful], the most fittest for learning is to be sought for. A pastime, saith Aristotle, must be like a medicine. Medicines stand by contraries; therefore, the nature of studying considered, the fittest pastime shall soon appear. In study every part of the body is idle, which thing causeth gross and cold humors to gather together and vex scholars very much; the mind is altogether bent and set on work. A pastime then must be had where every part of the body must be labored, to separate and lessen such humors withal; the mind must be unbent, to gather and fetch again his quickness withal. Thus pastimes for the mind only be nothing fit for students, because the body, which is most hurt by study, should take away no profit thereat. This knew Erasmus very well, when he was here in Cambridge; which, when he had been sore at his book (as Garret our book-binder had very often told me), for lack of better exercise, would take his horse and ride about the market-hill and come again. If a scholar should use bowls or tennis, the labor is too vehement and unequal, which is condemned of Galen; the example very ill for other men, when by so many acts they be made unlawful. Running, leaping, and quoiting be too vile for scholars, and so not fit by Aristotle's judgment; walking alone into the field hath no token of courage in it, a pastime like a simple man which is neither flesh nor fish. Therefore if a man would have a pastime wholesome and equal for every part of the body, pleasant and full of courage for the mind, not vile and unhonest to give ill example to laymen, not kept in gardens and corners, not lurking on the night and in holes, but evermore in the face of men, either to rebuke it when it doeth ill, or else to testify on it when it doth well, let him seek chiefly of all other for shooting.

ATHENÆUS

(Third Century A. D.)

Little is known that is authentic about the Græco-Egyptian Sophist or man of letters, Athenæus, author of the 'Deipnosophistæ' or Feast of the Learned, except his literary bequest. It is recorded that he was born at Naucratis, a city of the Nile Delta; and that after living at Alexandria he migrated to Rome. His date is presumptively fixed in the early part of the third century by his inclusion of Ulpian, the eminent jurist (whose death occurred A. D. 228) among the twenty-nine guests of the banquet whose wit and learning furnished its viands. He was perhaps a contemporary of the physician Galen, another of the putative banqueters, who served as a mouthpiece of the author's erudition.

Probably nothing concerning him deserved preservation except his unique work, the 'Feast of the Learned.' Of the fifteen books transmitted under the above title, the first two, and portions of the third, eleventh, and fifteenth, exist only in epitome — the name of the compiler and his time being equally obscure; yet it is curious that for many centuries these garbled fragments were the only memorials of the author extant. The other books, constituting the major portion of the work, have been pronounced authentic by eminent scholars with Bentley at their head. Without the slightest pretense of literary skill, the 'Feast of the Learned' is an immense storehouse of *Ana*, or table-talk. Into its receptacles the author gathers fruitage from nearly every branch of contemporary learning. He seemed to anticipate Macaulay's «vice of omniscience,» though he lacked Macaulay's incomparable literary virtues. Personal anecdote, criticism of the fine arts, the drama, history, poetry, philosophy, politics, medicine, and natural history enter into his pages, illustrated with an aptness and variety of quotation which seem to have no limit. He preserves old songs, folk-lore, and popular gossip, and relates whatever he may have heard, without sifting it. He gives, for example, a vivid account of the procession which greeted Demetrius Poliorketes:—

«When Demetrius returned from Leucadia and Corcyra to Athens, the Athenians received him not only with incense and garlands and libations, but they even sent out processional choruses, and greeted him with Ithyphallic hymns and dances. Stationed by his chariot-wheels, they sang and danced and chanted that he alone was a real god; the rest were sleeping or were on a journey, or did not exist: they called him son of Poseidon and Aphrodite, eminent for beauty, universal in his goodness to mankind; then they prayed and besought and supplicated him like a god.»

The hymn of worship which Athenæus evidently disapproved has been preserved, and turned into English by the accomplished J. A. Symonds on account of its rare and interesting versification. It belongs to the class of Prosodia, or processional hymns, which the greatest poets delighted to produce, and which were sung at religious festivals by young men and maidens, marching to the shrines in time with the music, their locks crowned with wreaths of olive, myrtle, or oleander; their white robes shining in the sun.

«See how the mightiest gods, and best beloved,
Towards our town are winging!
For lo! Demeter and Demetrius
This glad day is bringing!
She to perform her Daughter's solemn rites;
Mystic pomps attend her;
He joyous as a god should be, and blithe,
Comes with laughing splendor.
Show forth your triumph! Friends all, troop around,
Let him shine above you!
Be you the stars to circle him with love;
He's the sun to love you.
Hail, offspring of Poseidon, powerful god,
Child of Aphrodite!
The other deities keep far from earth;
Have no ears, though mighty;
They are not, or they will not hear us wail:
Thee our eye beholdeth;
Not wood, not stone, but living, breathing, real,
Thee our prayer enfoldeth.
First give us peace! Give, dearest, for thou canst;
Thou art Lord and Master!
The Sphinx, who not on Thebes, but on all Greece
Swoops to gloat and pasture;
The Ætolian, he who sits upon his rock,
Like that old disaster;
He feeds upon our flesh and blood, and we
Can no longer labor;
For it was ever thus the Ætolian thief
Preyed upon his neighbor;

Him punish Thou, or, if not Thou, then send
Œdipus to harm him,
Who'll cast this Sphinx down from his cliff of pride,
Or to stone will charm him.»

The Swallow song, which is cited, is an example of the folklore and old customs which Athenæus delighted to gather; and he tells how in springtime the children used to go about from door to door, begging doles and presents, and singing such half-sensible, half-foolish rhymes as—

«She is here, she is here, the swallow!
Fair seasons bringing, fair years to follow!
Her belly is white,
Her back black as night!
From your rich house
Roll forth to us
Tarts, wine, and cheese;
Or, if not these,
Oatmeal and barley-cake
The swallow deigns to take.
What shall we have? or must we hence away!
Thanks, if you give: if not, we'll make you pay!
The house-door hence we'll carry;
Nor shall the lintel tarry;
From hearth and home your wife we'll rob;
She is so small,
To take her off will be an easy job!
Whate'er you give, give largess free!
Up! open, open, to the swallow's call!
No grave old men, but merry children we!»

The 'Feast of the Learned' professes to be the record of the sayings at a banquet given at Rome by Laurentius to his learned friends. Laurentius stands as the typical Mæcenas of the period. The dialogue is reported after Plato's method, or as we see it in the more familiar form of the 'Satires' of Horace, though lacking the pithy vigor of these models. The discursiveness with which topics succeed each other, their want of logic or continuity, and the pelting fire of quotations in prose and verse, make a strange mixture. It may be compared to one of those dishes known both to ancients and to moderns, in which a great variety of scraps is enriched with condiments to the obliteration of all individual flavor. The plan of execution is so cumbersome that its only defense is its imitation of the inevitably disjointed talk when the guests of a dinner party are busy with their wine and nuts. One is tempted to suspect Athenæus of a sly sarcasm at his own expense, when he puts the following flings at pedantry in the mouths of some of his puppets —

«And now when Myrtilus had said all this in a connected statement, and when all were marveling at his memory, Cynulcus said,—

‹Your multifarious learning I do wonder at,
Though there is not a thing more vain and useless.›

«Says Hippo the Atheist, ‹But the divine Heraclitus also says, ‹A great variety of information does not usually give wisdom.› And Timon said, . . . ‹For what is the use of so many names, my good grammarian, which are more calculated to overwhelm the hearers than to do them any good?›»

This passage shows the redundancy of expression which disfigures so much of Athenæus. It is also typical of the cudgel-play of repartee between his characters, which takes the place of agile witticism. But if he heaps up vast piles of scholastic rubbish, he is also the Golden Dustman who shows us the treasure preserved by his saving pedantry. Scholars find the ‹Feast of the Learned› a quarry of quotations from classical writers whose works have perished. Nearly eight hundred writers and twenty-four hundred separate writings are referred to and cited in this disorderly encyclopædia, most of them now lost and forgotten. This literary thrift will always give rank to the work of Athenæus, poor as it is. The best editions of the original Greek are those of Dindorf (Leipzig, 1827), and of Meineke (Leipzig, 1867). The best English translation is that of C. D. Yonge in ‹Bohn's Classical Library,› from which, with slight alterations, the appended passages are selected.

WHY THE NILE OVERFLOWS

From the ‹Deipnosophistæ›

THALES the Milesian, one of the Seven Wise Men, says that the overflowing of the Nile arises from the Etesian winds; for that they blow up the river, and that the mouths of the river lie exactly opposite to the point from which they blow; and accordingly, that the wind blowing in the opposite direction hinders the flow of the waters; and the waves of the sea, dashing against the mouth of the river, and coming on with a fair wind in the same direction, beat back the river, and in this manner the Nile becomes full to overflowing. But Anaxagoras, the natural philosopher, says that the fullness of the Nile arises from the snow melting; and so too says Euripides, and some others of the tragic poets. Anaxagoras says this is the sole origin of all that fullness; but Euripides goes further and describes the exact place where this melting of the snow takes place.

HOW TO PRESERVE THE HEALTH

From the ‹Deipnosophistæ›

One ought to avoid thick perfumes, and to drink water that is thin and clear, and that in respect of weight is light, and that has no earthy particles in it. And that water is best which is of moderate heat or coldness, and which, when poured into a brazen or silver vessel, does not produce a blackish sediment. Hippocrates says, «Water which is easily warmed or easily chilled is alway lighter.» But that water is bad which takes a long time to boil vegetables; and so too is water full of nitre, or brackish. And in his book ‹On Waters,› Hippocrates calls good water drinkable; but stagnant water he calls bad, such as that from ponds or marshes. And most spring-water is rather hard.

Erasistratus says that some people test water by weight, and that is a most stupid proceeding. «For just look,» says he, «if men compare the water from the fountain Amphiaraus with that from the Eretrian spring, though one of them is good and the other bad, there is absolutely no difference in their respective weights.» And Hippocrates, in his book ‹On Places,› says that those waters are the best which flow from high ground, and from dry hills, «for they are white and sweet, and are able to bear very little wine, and are warm in winter and cold in summer.» And he praises those most, the springs of which break toward the east, and especially toward the northeast, for they must be inevitably clear and fragrant and light. Diocles says that water is good for the digestion and not apt to cause flatulency, that it is moderately cooling, and good for the eyes, and that it has no tendency to make the head feel heavy, and that it adds vigor to the mind and body. And Praxagoras says the same; and he also praises rain-water. But Euenor praises water from cisterns, and says that the best is that from the cistern of Amphiaraus, when compared with that from the fountain in Eretria.

That water is really nutritious is plain from the fact that some animals are nourished by it alone, as for instance grasshoppers. And there are many other liquids that are nutritious, such as milk, barleywater, and wine. At all events, animals at the breast are nourished by milk; and there are many nations who drink nothing but milk. And it is said that Democritus, the philosopher of Abdera, after he had determined to rid himself of life on account of his extreme old age, and after he had begun to diminish his food day by day, when the day of the Thesmophorian festival came round, and the women of his household besought him not to die during the festival, in order that they might not be debarred from their share in the festivities, was persuaded, and ordered a vessel full of honey to be set near him: and in this way he lived many days with no other support than honey; and then some days after, when the honey had been taken away, he died. But Democritus had always been fond of honey; and he once answered a man, who asked him how he could live in the enjoyment of the best health, that he might do so if he constantly moistened his inward parts with honey, and the outer man with oil. And bread and honey was the chief food of the Pythagoreans, according to the statement of Aristoxenus, who says that those who eat this for breakfast were free from disease all their lives. And Lycus says that the Cyrneans (a people who live near Sardinia) are very long-lived, because they are continually eating honey; and it is produced in great quantities among them.

AN ACCOUNT OF SOME GREAT EATERS

From the ‘Deipnosophistæ’

HERACLITUS, in his ‘Entertainer of Strangers,’ says that there was a woman named Helena who ate more than any other woman ever did. And Posidippus, in his ‘Epigrams,’ says that Phuromachus was a great eater, on whom he wrote this epigram:—

“This lowly ditch now holds Phuromachus,
Who used to swallow everything he saw,
Like a fierce carrion crow who roams all night.
Now here he lies wrapped in a ragged cloak.
But, O Athenian, whosoe'er you are,
Anoint this tomb and crown it with a wreath,
If ever in old times he feasted with you.
At last he came *sans* teeth, with eyes worn out,
And livid, swollen eyelids; clothed in skins,
With but one single cruse, and that scarce full;
Far from the gay Lenæan Games he came,
Descending humbly to Calliope.”

Amarantus of Alexandria, in his treatise on the Stage, says that Herodorus, the Megarian trumpeter, was a man three cubits and a half in height; and that he had great strength in his chest, and that he could eat six pounds of bread, and twenty *litræ* of meat, of whatever sort was provided for him, and that he could drink two *choes* of wine; and that he could play on two trumpets at once; and that it was his habit to sleep on only a lion's skin, and when playing on the trumpet he made a vast noise. Accordingly, when Demetrius the son of Antigonus was besieging Argos, and when his troops could not bring the battering ram against the walls on account of its weight, he, giving the signal with his two trumpets at once, by the great volume of sound which he poured forth, instigated the soldiers to move forward the engine with great zeal and earnestness; and he gained the prize in all the games ten times; and he used to eat sitting down, as Nestor tells us in his 'Theatrical Reminiscences.' And there was a woman, too, named Aglais, who played on the trumpet, the daughter of Megacles, who, in the first great procession which took place in Alexandria, played a processional piece of music; having a head-dress of false hair on, and a crest upon her head, as Posidippus proves by his epigrams on her. And she too could eat twelve *litræ* of meat and four *chœnixes* of bread, and drink a *chœnus* of wine, at one sitting.

There was besides a man of the name of Lityerses, a bastard son of Midas, the King of Celænæ, in Phrygia, a man of a savage and fierce aspect, and an enormous glutton. He is mentioned by Sositheus, the tragic poet, in his play called 'Daphnis' or 'Lityersa'; where he says:—

"He'll eat three asses' panniers, freight and all,
Three times in one brief day; and what he calls
A measure of wine is a ten-amphoræ cask;
And this he drinks all at a single draught."

And the man mentioned by Pherecrates, or Strattis, whichever was the author of the play called 'The Good Men,' was much such another; the author says:—

"*A.*—I scarcely in one day, unless I'm forced,
Can eat two bushels and a half of food.
B.—A most unhappy man! how have you lost
Your appetite, so as now to be content
With the scant rations of one ship of war?"

And Xanthus, in his 'Account of Lydia,' says that Cambles, who was the king of the Lydians, was a great eater and drinker, and also an exceeding epicure; and accordingly, that he one night cut up his own wife into joints and ate her; and then, in the morning, finding the hand of his wife still sticking in his mouth, he slew himself, as his act began to get notorious. And we have already mentioned Thys, the king of the Paphlagonians, saying that he too was a man of vast appetite, quoting Theopompus, who speaks of him in the thirty-fifth book of his 'History'; and Archilochus, in his 'Tetrameters,' has accused Charilas of the same fault, as the comic poets have attacked Cleonymus and Pisander. And Phœnicides mentions Chærippus in his 'Phylarchus' in the following terms:—

"And next to them I place Chærippus third;
He, as you know, will without ceasing eat
As long as any one will give him food,
Or till he bursts,—such stowage vast has he,
Like any house."

And Nicolaus the Peripatetic, in the hundred and third book of his 'History,' says that Mithridates, the king of Pontus, once proposed a contest in great eating and great drinking (the prize was a talent of silver), and that he himself gained the victory in both; but he yielded the prize to the man who was judged to be second to him, namely, Calomodrys, the athlete of Cyzicus. And Timocreon the Rhodian, a poet and an athlete who had gained the victory in the pentathlum, ate and drank a great deal, as the epigram on his tomb shows:—

"Much did I eat, much did I drink, and much
Did I abuse all men; now here I lie:—
My name Timocreon, my country Rhodes."

And Thrasymachus of Chalcedon, in one of his prefaces, says that Timocreon came to the great king of Persia, and being entertained by him, did eat an immense quantity of food; and when the king asked him, What he would do on the strength of it? he said that he would beat a great many Persians; and the next day having vanquished a great many, one after another, taking them one by one, after this he beat the air with his hands; and when they asked him what he wanted, he said that he had all those blows left in him if any one was inclined to come on. And Clearchus, in the fifth book of his ‹Lives,› says that Cantibaris the Persian, whenever his jaws were weary with eating, had his slaves to pour food into his mouth, which he kept open as if they were pouring it into an empty vessel. But Hellanicus, in the first book of his Deucalionea, says that Erysichthon, the son of Myrmidon, being a man perfectly insatiable in respect of food, was called Æthon. Also Polemo, in the first book of his ‹Treatise addressed to Timæus,› says that among the Sicilians there was a temple consecrated to gluttony, and an image of Demeter Sito; near which also there was a statue of Himalis, as there is at Delphi one of Hermuchus, and as at Scolum in Bœotia there are statues of Megalartus and Megalomazus.

THE LOVE OF ANIMALS FOR MAN

From the ‹Deipnosophistæ›

And even dumb animals have fallen in love with men; for there was a cock who took a fancy to a man of the name of Secundus, a cupbearer of the king; and the cock was nicknamed «the Centaur.» This Secundus was a slave of Nicomedes, the king of Bithynia; as Nicander informs us in the sixth book of his essay on ‹The Revolutions of Fortune.› And at Ægium, a goose took a fancy to a boy; as Clearchus relates in the first book of his ‹Amatory Anecdotes.› And Theophrastus, in his essay ‹On Love,› says that the name of this boy was Amphilochus, and that he was a native of Olenus. And Hermeas the son of Hermodorus, who was a Samian by birth, says that a goose also took a fancy to Lacydes the philosopher. And in Leucadia (according to a story told by Clearchus), a peacock fell so in love with a maiden there that when she died, the bird died too. There is a story also that at Iasus a dolphin took a fancy to a boy, and this story is told by Duris, in the ninth book of his ‹History›; and the subject of that book is the history of Alexander, and the historian's words are these:—

«He likewise sent for the boy from Iasus. For near Iasus there was a boy whose name was Dionysius, and he once, when leaving the palæstra with the rest of the boys, went down to the sea and bathed; and a dolphin came forward out of the deep water to meet him, and taking him on his back, swam away with him a considerable distance into the open sea, and then brought him back again to land."

The dolphin is in fact an animal which is very fond of men, and very intelligent, and one very susceptible of gratitude. Accordingly, Phylarchus, in his twelfth book, says:—

"Coiranus the Milesian, when he saw some fishermen who had caught a dolphin in a net, and who were about to cut it up, gave them some money and bought the fish, and took it down and put it back in the sea again. And after this it happened to him to be shipwrecked near Myconos, and while every one else perished, Coiranus alone was saved by a dolphin. And when at last he died of old age in his native country, as it so happened that his funeral procession passed along the seashore close to Miletus, a great shoal of dolphins appeared on that day in the harbor, keeping only a very little distance from those who were attending the funeral of Coiranus, as if they also were joining in the procession and sharing in their grief."

The same Phylarchus also relates, in the twentieth book of his 'History,' the great affection which was once displayed by an elephant for a boy. And his words are these:—

"Now there was a female elephant kept with this elephant, and the name of the female elephant was Nicæa; and to her the wife of the king of India, when dying, intrusted her child, which was just a month old. And when the woman did die, the affection for the child displayed by the beast was most extraordinary; for it could not endure the child to be away; and whenever it did not see him, it was out of spirits. And so, whenever the nurse fed the infant with milk, she placed it in its cradle between the feet of the beast; and if she had not done so, the elephant would not take any food; and after this, it would take whatever reeds and grass there were near, and, while the child was sleeping, beat away the flies with the bundle. And whenever the child wept, it would rock the cradle with its trunk, and lull it to sleep. And very often the male elephant did the same."

PER DANIEL AMADEUS ATTERBOM

(1790–1855)

Among the leaders of the romantic movement which affected Swedish literature in the earlier half of the nineteenth century was P. D. A. Atterbom, one of the greatest lyric poets of his country. He was born in Ostergöthland, in 1790, and at the age of fifteen was already so advanced in his studies that he entered the University of Upsala. There in 1807 he helped to found the «Musis Amici,» a students' society of literature and art; its membership included Hedbom, who is remembered for his beautiful hymns, and the able and laborious Palmblad,—author of several popular books, including the well-known novel 'Aurora Königsmark.' This society soon assumed the name of the Aurora League, and set itself to free Swedish literature from French influence. The means chosen were the study of German romanticism, and a treatment of the higher branches of literature in direct opposition to the course decreed by the Academical school. The leaders of this revolution were Atterbom, eighteen years old, and Palmblad, twenty!

The first organ of the League was the Polyfem, soon replaced by the Phosphorus (1810–1813), from which the young enthusiasts received their sobriquet of «Phosphorists.» Theoretically this sheet was given to the discussion of Schelling's philosophy, and of metaphysical problems in general; practically, to the publication of the original poetry of the new school. The Phosphorists did a good work in calling attention to the old Swedish folk-lore, and awakening a new interest in its imaginative treasures. But their best service lay in their forcible and earnest treatment of religious questions, which at that time were most superficially dealt with.

When the 'Phosphorus' was in its third year the Romanticists united in bringing out two new organs: the Poetical Calendar (1812–1822), which published poetry only, and the Swedish Literary News (1813–1824), containing critical essays of great scientific value. The Phosphorists, who had shown themselves ardent but not always sagacious fighters, now appeared at their best, and dashed into the controversy which was engaging the attention of the Swedish reading public. This included not only literature, but philosophy and religion, as well as art. The odds were now on one side, now on the other. The Academicians might easily have conquered their youthful opponents, however, had not their bitterness continually forged new weapons against themselves. In 1820 the Phosphorists wrote the excellent satire, 'Marskall's Sleepless Nights,' aimed at Wallmark, leader of the Academicians. Gradually the strife died out, and the man who carried off the palm, and for a time became the leader of Swedish poetry, was Tegnèr, who was hardly a partisan of either side.

In 1817 Atterbom had gone abroad, broken down in health by his uninterrupted studies. While in Germany he entered into a warm friendship with Schelling and Steffens, and in Naples he met the Danish sculptor Thorwaldsen, to whose circle of friends he became attached. On his return he was made tutor of German and literature to the Crown Prince. In 1828 the Chair of Logics and Metaphysics at Upsala was offered him, and he held this for seven years, when he exchanged it for that of Æsthetics. In 1839 he was elected a member of the Academy whose bitterest enemy he had been, and so the peace was signed.

Atterbom is undoubtedly the greatest lyrical poet in the ranks of the Phosphorists. His verses are wonderfully melodious and full of charm, in spite of the fact that his tendency to the mystical at times makes him obscure. Among the best of his productions are a cycle of lyrics entitled 'The Flowers'; 'The Isle of Blessedness,' a romantic drama of great beauty, published in 1823; and a fragment of a fairy drama, 'The Blue Bird.' He introduced the sonnet into Swedish poetry, and did a great service to the national literature by his critical work, 'Swedish Seers and Poets,' a collection of biographies and criticisms of poets and philosophers before and during the reign of Gustavus III. Atterbom's life may be accounted long in the way of service, though he died at the age of sixty-five.

THE GENIUS OF THE NORTH

It is true that our Northern nature is lofty and strong. Its characteristics may well awaken deep meditation and emotion.

When the Goddess of Song has grown up in these surroundings, her view of life is like that mirrored in our lakes, where, between the dark shadows of mountain and trees on the shore, a light-blue sky looks down. Over this mirror the Northern morning and the Northern day, the Northern evening and the Northern night, rise in a glorious beauty. Our Muse kindles a lofty hero's flame, a lofty seer's flame, and always the flame of a lofty immortality. In this sombre North we experience an immense joyousness and an immense melancholy, moods of earth-coveting and of earth-renunciation. With equal mind we behold the fleet, charming dream of her summers, her early harvest with its quickly falling splendor, and the darkness and silence of the long winter's sleep. For if the gem-like green of the verdure proclaims its short life, it proclaims at the same time its richness,—and in winter the very darkness seems made to let the starry vault shine through with a glory of Valhalla and Gimle. Indeed, in our North, the winter possesses an impressiveness, a freshness, which only we Norsemen understand. Add to these strong effects of nature the loneliness of life in a wide tract of land, sparingly populated by a still sparingly educated people, and then think of the poet's soul which must beat against these barriers of circumstance and barriers of spirit! Yet the barriers that hold him in as often help as hinder his striving. These conditions explain what our literature amply proves; that so far, the only poetical form which has reached perfection in Sweden is the lyrical. This will be otherwise only as the northern mind, through a growing familiarity with contemporaneous Europe, will consent to be drawn from its forest solitude into the whirl of the motley World's Fair outside its boundaries. It is probable that the lyrical gift will always be the true possession of the Swedish poet. His genius is such that it needs only a beautiful moment's exaltation (blissful, whether the experience be called joy or sorrow) to rise on full, free wings, suddenly singing out his very inmost being. Whether the poet makes this inmost being his subject, or quite forgets himself in a richer and higher theme, is of little consequence.

If, again, no true lyric can express a narrow egoism, least of all could the Swedish, in spite of the indivisible relation between nature and man. The entire Sämunds-Edda shows us that Scandinavian poetry was originally lyrical-didactic, as much religious as heroic. Not only in lyrical impression, but also in lyrical contemplation and lyrical expression, will the Swedish heroic poem still follow its earliest trend. Yes, let us believe that this impulse will some day lead Swedish poetry into the only path of true progress, to the point where dramatic expression will attain perfection of artistic form. This development is foreshadowed already in the high tragic drama, in the view of the world taken by the old Swedish didactic poem; and in some of the songs of the Edda, as well as in many an old folk-song and folk-play.

THE LILY OF THE VALLEY

O'ER hill and dale the welcome news is flying
That summer's drawing near;
Out of my thicket cool, my cranny hidden,
Around I shyly peer.

He will not notice me, this guest resplendent,
Unseen I shall remain,
Content to live if of his banquet royal
Some glimpses I may gain.

Behold! Behold! His banquet hall's before me,
Pillared with forest trees;
Lo! as he feasts, a thousand sunbeams sparkle,
His gracious smiles are these.

Hail to thee, brilliant world! Ye heavens fretted
With clouds of silver hue!
Ye waves of mighty ocean, tossing, tossing,
Fair in my sight as new!

Far in the past (if years my life has numbered,
Ghost-like in thought they drift),
Came to me silently the truth eternal—
Joy is life's richest gift.

Thus, in return for life's abundant dower,
A gift have I: I bear
A spotless soul, from whose unseen recesses
Exhales a fragrance rare.

Strong is the power in gentle souls indwelling,
Born of a joy divine;
Theirs is a sphere untrod by creatures earthly,
By beings gross, supine.

Fragile and small, and set in quiet places,
My worth should I forget?
Some one who seeks friend, counselor, or lover,
Will find and prize me yet.

Thou lovely maid, through mossy pathways straying,
Striving to make thy choice,
Hearing the while the brook which downward leaping,
Lifts up its merry voice,

Pluck me; and as a rich reward I'll whisper
Things thou wilt love to hear:
The name of him who comes to win thy favor
I'll whisper in thine ear!

SVANHVIT'S COLLOQUY

From 'The Islands of the Blest'

SVANHVIT (alone in her chamber)

NO ASDOLF yet, — in vain and everywhere
Hath he been sought for, since his foaming steed,
At morn, with vacant saddle, stood before
The lofty staircase in the castle yard.
His drooping crest and wildly rolling eye,
And limbs with frenzied terror quivering,
All seemed as though the midnight fiends had urged
His swiftest flight through many a wood and plain.
O Lord, that know'st what he hath witnessed there!
Wouldst thou but give one single speaking sound
Unto the faithful creature's silent tongue,
That momentary voice would be, for me,
A call to life or summons to the grave.

[She goes to the window.]

And yet what childish fears are these! How oft
Hath not my Asdolf boldest feats achieved
And aye returned, unharmed and beautiful!
Yes, beautiful, alas! like this cold flower
That proudly glances on the frosty pane.
Short is the violet's, short the cowslip's spring; —
The frost-flowers live far longer: cold as they
The beautiful should be, that it may share
The splendor of the light without its heat;
For else the sun of life must soon dissolve
The hard, cold, shining pearls to liquid tears;
And tears — flow fast away.

[She breathes on the window.]

Become transparent, thou fair Asdolf flower,
That I may look into the vale beneath!
There lies the city, — Asdolf's capital:
How wondrously the spotless vest of snow

On roof, on mount, on market-place now smiles
A glittering welcome to the morning sun,
Whose blood-red beams shed beauty on the earth!
The Bride of Sacrifice makes no lament,
But smiles in silence, — knowing sadly well
That she is slighted, and that he, who could
Call forth her spring, doth not, but rather dwells
In other climes, where lavishly he pours
His fond embracing beams, while she, alas!
In wintry shade and lengthened loneliness
Cold on the solitary couch reclines.—

[After a pause.]

What countless paths wind down, from divers points,
To yonder city gates! — Oh, wilt not thou,
My star, appear to me on one of them?
Whate'er I said,— thou art my worshiped sun.
Then pardon me; — thou art not cold; oh, no!
Too warm, too glowing warm, art thou for me.

Yet thus it is! Thy being's music has
A thousand chords with thousand varying tones,
Whilst I but one poor sound can offer thee
Of tenderness and truth. At times, indeed,
This too may have its power, — but then it lasts
One and the same forever, sounding still
Unalterably like itself alone;
A wordless prayer to God for what we love,
'Tis more a whisper than a sound, and charms
Like new-mown meadows, when the grass exhales
Sweet fragrance to the foot that tramples it.

Kings, heroes, towering spirits among men,
Rush to their aim on wild and stormy wings,
And far beneath them view the world, whose form
For ever varies on from hour to hour.
What would they ask of love? That, volatile,
In changeful freshness it may charm their ears
With proud, triumphant songs, when high in air
Victorious banners wave; or sweetly lull
To rapturous repose, when round them roars
The awful thunder's everlasting voice!

Mute, mean, and spiritless to them must seem
The maid who is no more than woman. How
Should she o'er-sound the storm their wings have raised?

[Sitting down.]

Great Lord! how lonely I become within
These now uncheerful towers! O'er all the earth
No shield have I,—no mutual feeling left!
'Tis true that those around me all are kind,
And well I know they love me,—more, indeed,
Than my poor merits claim. Yet, even though
They raised me to my Asdolf's royal throne,
As being the last of all his line,—ah me!
No solace could it bring;—for then far less
Might I reveal the sorrow of my soul!
A helpless maiden's tears like raindrops fall,
Which in a July night, ere harvest-time,
Bedew the flowers, and, trembling, stand within
Their half-closed eyes unnumbered and unknown.

[She rises.]

Yet One there is, who counts the maiden's tears;—
But when will their sad number be fulfilled?—

[Walking to and fro.]

How calm was I in former days!—I now
Am so no more! My heart beats heavily,
Oppressed within its prison-cave. Ah! fain
Would I that it might burst its bonds, so that
'Twere conscious, Asdolf, I sometimes had seemed
Not all unworthy in thine eyes.

[She takes the guitar.]

A gentle friend—the Master from Vallandia—
Has taught me how I may converse with thee,
Thou cherished token of my Asdolf's love!
I have been told of far-off lakes, around
Whose shores the cypress and the willow wave,
And make a mournful shade above the stream,
Which, dark, and narrow on the surface, swells
Broad and unfathomably deep below;—
From these dark lakes at certain times, and most
On Sabbath morns and eves of festivals,
Uprising from the depths, is heard a sound
Most strange and wild, as of the tuneful bells
Of churches and of castles long since sunk;
And as the wanderer's steps approach the shore,
He hears more plainly the lamenting tone

Of the dark waters, whilst the surface still
Continues motionless and calm, and seems
To listen with a melancholy joy,
While thus the dim mysterious depths resound;
So let me strive to soften and subdue
My heart's dark swelling with a soothful song.

[She plays and sings.]

The maiden bound her hunting-net
At morning fresh and fair—

Ah, no! that lay doth ever make me grieve.
Another, then! that of the hapless flower,
Surprised by frost and snow in early spring.

[Sings.]

Hush thee, oh, hush thee,
Slumber from snow and stormy sky,
Lovely and lone one!
Now is the time for thee to die,
When vale and streamlet frozen lie.
Hush thee, oh, hush thee!

Hours hasten onward;—
For thee the last will soon be o'er.
Rest thee, oh, rest thee!
Flowers have withered thus before,—
And, my poor heart, what wouldst thou more?
Rest thee, oh, rest thee!

Shadows should darkly
Enveil thy past delights and woes.
Forget, oh, forget them!
'Tis thus that eve its shadows throws;
But now, in noiseless night's repose,
Forget, oh, forget them!

Slumber, oh, slumber!
No friend hast thou like kindly snow;
Sleep is well for thee,
For whom no second spring will blow;
Then why, poor heart, still beating so?
Slumber, oh, slumber!

Hush thee, oh, hush thee!
Resign thy life-breath in a sigh,
Listen no longer,
Life bids farewell to thee,—then die!
Sad one, good night!—in sweet sleep lie!
Hush thee, oh, hush thee!

[She bursts into tears.]

Would now that I might bid adieu to life;
But, ah! no voice to me replies, «Sleep well!»

THE MERMAID

Leaving the sea, the pale moon lights the strand.
Tracing old runes, a youth inscribes the sand.
And by the rune-ring waits a woman fair,
Down to her feet extends her dripping hair.

Woven of lustrous pearls her robes appear,
Thin as the air and as the water clear.
Lifting her veil with milk-white hand she shows
Eyes in whose deeps a deadly fire glows.

Blue are her eyes: she looks upon him — bound,
As by a spell, he views their gulf profound.
Heaven and death are there: in his desire,
He feels the chill of ice, the heat of fire.

Graciously smiling, now she whispers low:—
«The runes are dark, would you their meaning know?
Follow! my dwelling is as dark and deep;
You, you alone, its treasure vast shall keep!»

«Where is your dwelling, charming maid, now say!»
«Built on a coral island far away,
Crystalline, golden, floats that castle free,
Meet for a lovely daughter of the sea!»

Still he delays and muses, on the strand;
Now the alluring maiden grasps his hand.
«Ah! Do you tremble, you who were so bold?»
«Yes, for the heaving breakers are so cold!»

«Let not the mounting waves your spirit change!
Take, as a charm, my ring with sea-runes strange.
Here is my crown of water-lilies white,
Here is my harp, with human bones bedight.»

. . . .

«What say my Father and my Mother dear?
What says my God, who bends from heaven to hear?»
«Father and Mother in the churchyard lie.
As for thy God, he deigns not to reply.»

Blithely she dances on the pearl-strewn sand,
Smiting the bone-harp with her graceful hand.
Fair is her bosom, through her thin robe seen,
White as a swan beheld through rushes green.

«Follow me, youth! through ocean deeps we'll rove;
There is my castle in its coral grove;
There the red branches purple shadows throw,
There the green waves, like grass, sway to and fro.

. . . .

«I have a thousand sisters; none so fair.
He whom I wed receives my sceptre rare.
Wisdom occult my mother will impart.
Granting his slightest wish, I'll cheer his heart.»

. . . .

«Heaven and earth to win you I abjure!
Child of the ocean, is your promise sure?»
«Heaven and earth abjuring, great's your gain,
Throned with the ancient gods, a king to reign!»

Lo, as she speaks, a thousand starlights gleam,
Lighted for Heaven's Christmas day they seem.
Sighing, he swears the oath,—the die is cast;
Into the mermaid's arms he sinks at last.

. . . .

High on the shore the rushing waves roll in.
«Why does the color vary on your skin?
What! From your waist a fish's tail depends!»
«Worn for the dances of my sea-maid friends.»

High overhead, the stars, like torches, burn:
«Haste! to my golden castle I return.
Save me, ye runes!»—«Yes, try them now; they fail.
Pupil of *heathen* men, my spells prevail!»

Proudly she turns; her sceptre strikes the wave,
Roaring, it parts; the ocean yawns, a grave.
Mermaid and youth go down; the gulf is deep.
Over their heads the surging waters sweep.

Often, on moonlight nights, when bluebells ring,
When for their sports the elves are gathering,
Out of the waves the youth appears, and plays
Tunes that are merry, mournful, like his days.

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

(Twelfth Century)

BY FREDERICK MORRIS WARREN

This charming tale of mediæval France has reached modern times in but one manuscript, which is now in the National Library at Paris. It gives us no hint as to the time and place of the author, but its linguistic forms would indicate for locality the borderland of Champagne and Picardy, while the fact that the verse of the story is in assonance would point to the later twelfth century as the date of the original draft. It would thus be contemporaneous with the last poems of Chrétien de Troyes (1170–80). The author was probably a minstrel by profession, but one of more than ordinary taste and talent. For, evidently skilled in both song and recitation, he so divided his narrative between poetry and prose that he gave himself ample opportunity to display his powers, while at the same time he retained more easily, by this variety, the attention of his audience. He calls his invention—if his invention it be—a «song-story.» The subject he drew probably from reminiscences of the widely known story of Floire and Blanchefleur; reversing the parts, so that here it is the hero who is the Christian, while the heroine is a Saracen captive baptized in her early years. The general outline of the plot also resembles indistinctly the plot of Floire and Blanchefleur, though its topography is somewhat indefinite, and a certain amount of absurd adventure in strange lands is interwoven with it. With these exceptions, however, few literary productions of the Middle Ages can rival ‘Aucassin and Nicolette’ in graceful sentiment and sympathetic description.

The Paris manuscript gives the music for the poetical parts,—music that is little more than a modulation. There is a different notation for the first two lines, but for the other lines this notation is repeated in couplets, except that the last line of each song or *laisse*—being a half-line—has a cadence of its own. The lines are all seven syllables in length, save the final half-lines, and the assonance, which all but the half-lines observe, tends somewhat towards rhyme.

The story begins with a song which serves as prologue; and then its prose takes up the narrative, telling how Aucassin, son of Garin, Count of Beaucaire, so loved Nicolette, a Saracen maiden, who had been sold to the Viscount of Beaucaire, baptized and adopted by him, that he had forsaken knighthood and chivalry and even refused to defend his father's territories against Count Bougart of Valence. Accordingly his father ordered the Viscount to send away Nicolette, and he walled her up in a tower of his palace. Later, Aucassin is imprisoned by his father. But Nicolette escapes, hears him lamenting in his cell, and comforts him until the warden on the tower warns her of the approach of the town watch. She flees to the forest outside the gates, and there, in order to test Aucassin's fidelity, builds a rustic tower. When he is released from prison, Aucassin hears from shepherd lads of Nicolette's hiding-place, and seeks her bower. The lovers, united, resolve to leave the country. They take ship and are driven to the kingdom of Torelore, whose queen they find in child-bed, while the king is with the army. After a three years' stay in Torelore they are captured by Saracen pirates and separated. Contrary winds blow Aucassin's boat to Beaucaire, where he succeeds to Garin's estate, while Nicolette is carried to Carthage. The sight of the city reminds her that she is the daughter of its king, and a royal marriage is planned for her. But she avoids this by assuming a minstrel's garb, and setting sail for Beaucaire. There, before Aucassin, she sings of her own adventures, and in due time makes herself known to him. Now in one last strain our story-teller celebrates the lovers' meeting, concluding with —

«Our song-story comes to an end,
I know no more to tell.»

And thus he takes leave of the gentle and courageous maiden.

The whole account of these trials and reunions does not occupy over forty pages of the original French, which has been best edited by H. Suchier at Paderborn (second edition, 1881). In 1878, A. Bida published, with illustrations, a modern French version of the story at Paris, accompanied by the original text and a preface by Gaston Paris. This version was translated into English by A. Rodney Macdonough under the title of ‘The Lovers of Provence: Aucassin and Nicolette’ (New York, 1880). Additional illustrations by American artists found place in this edition. F. W. Bourdillon has published the original text and an English version, together with an exhaustive introduction, bibliography, notes, and glossary (London, 1887), and, later in the same year, Andrew Lang wrote out another translation, accompanied by an introduction and notes: ‘Aucassin and Nicolette’ (London). The extracts given below are from Lang's version, with occasional slight alterations.

F. M. Warren.

'TIS OF AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE

Who would list to the good lay,
Gladness of the captive gray?
'Tis how two young lovers met,
Aucassin and Nicolette;
Of the pains the lover bore,
And the perils he outwore,
For the goodness and the grace
Of his love, so fair of face.

Sweet the song, the story sweet,
There is no man hearkens it,
No man living 'neath the sun,
So outwearied, so fordone,
Sick and woful, worn and sad,
But is healèd, but is glad,
'Tis so sweet.

So say they, speak they, tell they The Tale,

How the Count Bougart of Valence made war on Count Garin of Beaucaire,—war so great, so marvelous, and so mortal that never a day dawned but alway he was there, by the gates and walls and barriers of the town, with a hundred knights, and ten thousand men-at-arms, horsemen and footmen: so burned he the Count's land, and spoiled his country, and slew his men. Now, the Count Garin of Beaucaire was old and frail, and his good days were gone over. No heir had he, neither son nor daughter, save one young man only; such an one as I shall tell you. Aucassin was the name of the damoiseau: fair was he, goodly, and great, and featly fashioned of his body and limbs. His hair was yellow, in little curls, his eyes blue-gray and laughing, his face beautiful and shapely, his nose high and well set, and so richly seen was he in all things good, that in him was none evil at all. But so suddenly was he overtaken of Love, who is a great master, that he would not, of his will, be a knight, nor take arms, nor follow tourneys, nor do whatsoever him beseemed. Therefore his father and mother said to him:—

«Son, go take thine arms, mount thine horse, and hold thy land, and help thy men, for if they see thee among them, more stoutly will they keep in battle their lives and lands, and thine and mine.»

« Father, » answered Aucassin, « what are you saying now? Never may God give me aught of my desire, if I be a knight, or mount my horse, or face stour and battle wherein knights smite and are smitten again, unless thou give me Nicolette, my true love, that I love so well. »

« Son, » said the father, « this may not be. Let Nicolette go. A slave girl is she, out of a strange land, and the viscount of this town bought her of the Saracens, and carried her hither, and hath reared her and had her christened, and made her his god-daughter, and one day will find a young man for her, to win her bread honorably. Herein hast thou naught to make nor mend; but if a wife thou wilt have, I will give thee the daughter of a king, or a count. There is no man so rich in France, but if thou desire his daughter, thou shall have her. »

« Faith! my father, » said Aucassin, « tell me where is the place so high in all the world, that Nicolette, my sweet lady and love, would not grace it well? If she were Empress of Constantinople or of Germany, or Queen of France or England, it were little enough for her; so gentle is she and courteous, and debonnaire, and compact of all good qualities. »

Imprisonment of Nicolette

When Count Garin of Beaucaire knew that he would not avail to withdraw Aucassin, his son, from the love of Nicolette, he went to the viscount of the city, who was his man, and spake to him saying:—« Sir Count: away with Nicolette, thy daughter in God; cursed be the land whence she was brought into this country, for by reason of her do I lose Aucassin, that will neither be a knight, nor do aught of the things that fall to him to be done. And wit ye well, » he said, « that if I might have her at my will, I would burn her in a fire, and yourself might well be sore adread. »

« Sir, » said the Viscount, « this is grievous to me that he comes and goes and hath speech with her. I had bought the maid at mine own charges, and nourished her, and baptized, and made her my daughter in God. Yea, I would have given her to a young man that should win her bread honorably. With this had Aucassin, thy son, naught to make or mend. But sith it is thy will and thy pleasure, I will send her into that land and that country where never will he see her with his eyes. »

"Have a heed to thyself," said the Count Garin: "thence might great evil come on thee."

So parted they each from the other. Now the Viscount was a right rich man: so had he a rich palace with a garden in face of it; in an upper chamber thereof he had Nicolette placed, with one old woman to keep her company, and in that chamber put bread and meat and wine and such things as were needful. Then he had the door sealed, that none might come in or go forth, save that there was one window, over against the garden, and quite strait, through which came to them a little air.

Here singeth one:—

Nicolette as ye heard tell
Prisoned is within a cell
That is painted wondrously
With colors of a far countrie.
At the window of marble wrought,
There the maiden stood in thought,
With straight brows and yellow hair,
Never saw ye fairer fair!
On the wood she gazed below,
And she saw the roses blow,
Heard the birds sing loud and low,
Therefore spoke she wofully:
"Ah me, wherefore do I lie
Here in prison wrongfully?
Aucassin, my love, my knight,
Am I not thy heart's delight?
Thou that lovest me aright!
'Tis for thee that I must dwell
In this vaulted chamber cell,
Hard beset and all alone!
By our Lady Mary's Son
Here no longer will I wonn,
If I may flee!"

AUCASSIN AND THE VISCOUNT

[*The Viscount speaks first*]

"PLENTIFUL lack of comfort hadst thou got thereby; for in Hell would thy soul have lain while the world endures, and into Paradise wouldst thou have entered never."

"In Paradise what have I to win? Therein I seek not to enter, but only to have Nicolette, my sweet lady that I love so well.

For into Paradise go none but such folk as I shall tell thee now: Thither go these same old priests, and halt old men and maimed, who all day and night cower continually before the altars, and in these old crypts; and such folks as wear old amices, and old clouted frocks, and naked folks and shoeless, and those covered with sores, who perish of hunger and thirst, and of cold, and of wretchedness. These be they that go into Paradise; with them have I naught to make. But into Hell would I fain go; for into Hell fare the goodly clerks, and goodly knights that fall in tourneys and great wars, and stout men-at-arms, and the free men. With these would I liefly go. And thither pass the sweet ladies and courteous, that have two lovers, or three, and their lords also thereto. Thither goes the gold, and the silver, and fur of vair, and fur of gris; and there too go the harpers, and minstrels, and the kings of this world. With these I would gladly go, let me but have with me Nicolette, my sweetest lady."

Aucassin Captures Count Bougart

The damoiseau was tall and strong, and the horse whereon he sat was right eager. And he laid hand to sword, and fell a-smiting to right and left, and smote through helm and nasal, and arm, and clenched hand, making a murder about him, like a wild boar when hounds fall on him in the forest, even till he struck down ten knights, and seven he hurt; and straightway he hurled out of the press, and rode back again at full speed, sword in hand. Count Bougart of Valence heard it said that they were to hang Aucassin, his enemy, so he came into that place and Aucassin was ware of him. He gat his sword into his hand, and struck at his helm with such a stroke that it drave it down on his head, and he being stunned, fell groveling. And Aucassin laid hands on him, and caught him by the nasal of his helmet, and gave him up to his father.

"Father," quoth Aucassin, "lo, here is your mortal foe, who hath so warred on you and done you such evil. Full twenty months did this war endure, and might not be ended by man."

"Fair son," said his father, "thy feats of youth shouldst thou do, and not seek after folly."

"Father," saith Aucassin, "sermon me no sermons, but fulfill my covenant."

"Ha! what covenant, fair son?"

"What, father! hast thou forgotten it? By mine own head, whosoever forgets, will I not forget it, so much it hath me at heart. Didst thou not covenant with me when I took up arms, and went into the stour, that if God brought me back safe and sound, thou wouldst let me see Nicolette, my sweet lady, even so long that I may have of her two words or three, and one kiss? So didst thou covenant, and my mind is that thou keep thy word."

"I?" quoth the father; "God forsake me when I keep this covenant! Nay, if she were here, I would have burned her in the fire, and thou thyself shouldst be sore adread."

THE LOVERS' MEETING

AUCASSIN was cast into prison as ye have heard tell, and Nicolette, of her part, was in the chamber. Now it was summer-time, the month of May, when days are warm, and long, and clear, and the nights still and serene. Nicolette lay one night on her bed, and saw the moon shine clear through a window, and heard the nightingale sing in the garden, and she minded her of Aucassin her friend, whom she loved so well. Then fell she to thoughts of Count Garin of Beaucaire, that he hated her to death; and therefore deemed she that there she would no longer abide, for that, if she were told of, and the Count knew where she lay, an ill death he would make her die. She saw that the old woman was sleeping who held her company. Then she arose, and clad her in a mantle of silk she had by her, very goodly, and took sheets of the bed and towels and knotted one to the other, and made therewith a cord as long as she might, and knotted it to a pillar in the window, and let herself slip down into the garden; then caught up her raiment in both hands, behind and before, and kilted up her kirtle, because of the dew that she saw lying deep on the grass, and so went on her way down through the garden.

Her locks were yellow and curled, her eyes blue-gray and smiling, her face featly fashioned, the nose high and fairly set, the lips more red than cherry or rose in time of summer, her teeth white and small; and her breasts so firm that they bore up the folds of her bodice as they had been two walnuts; so slim was she in the waist that your two hands might have clipped her; and the daisy flowers that brake beneath her as she went tiptoe, and that bent above her instep, seemed black against her feet and ankles, so white was the maiden. She came to the postern-gate, and unbarred it, and went out through the streets of Beaucaire, keeping always on the shadowy side, for the moon was shining right clear, and so wandered she till she came to the tower where her lover lay. The tower was flanked with pillars, and she cowered under one of them, wrapped in her mantle. Then thrust she her head through a crevice of the tower, that was old and worn, and heard Aucassin, who was weeping within, and making dole and lament for the sweet friend he loved so well. And when she had listened to him some time she began to say:—

Here one singeth:—

Nicolette, the bright of brow,
On a pillar leanèd now,
All Aucassin's wail did hear
For his love that was so dear,
Then the maid spake low and clear:—
«Gentle knight, withouten fear,
Little good befalleth thee,
Little help of sigh or tear.
Ne'er shalt thou have joy of me.
Never shalt thou win me; still
Am I held in evil will
Of thy father and thy kin.
Therefore must I cross the sea,
And another land must win.»
Then she cut her curls of gold,
Cast them in the dungeon hold,
Aucassin doth clasp them there,
Kiss'th the curls that were so fair,
Them doth in his bosom bear,
Then he wept, e'en as of old,
All for his love!

Thus say they, speak they, tell they The Tale.

When Aucassin heard Nicolette say that she would pass into a far country, he was all in wrath.

«Fair, sweet friend,» quoth he, «thou shalt not go, for then wouldst thou be my death. And the first man that saw thee and had the might withal, would take thee straightway into his bed to be his leman. And once thou camest into a man's bed, and that bed not mine, wit ye well that I would not tarry till I had found a knife to pierce my heart and slay myself. Nay, verily, wait so long I would not; but would hurl myself so far as I might see a wall, or a black stone, and I would dash my head against it so mightily that the eyes would start and my brain burst. Rather would I die even such a death than know that thou hadst lain in a man's bed, and that bed not mine."

"Aucassin," she said, "I trow thou lovest me not as much as thou sayest, but I love thee more than thou lovest me."

"Ah, fair, sweet friend," said Aucassin, "it may not be that thou shouldest love me even as I love thee. Woman may not love man as man loves woman; for a woman's love lies in her eye, and the bud of her breast, and her foot's tiptoe, but the love of a man is in his heart planted, whence it can never issue forth and pass away."

Now when Aucassin and Nicolette were holding this parley together, the town's watchmen were coming down a street, with swords drawn beneath their cloaks, for Count Garin had charged them that if they could take her, they should slay her. But the sentinel that was on the tower saw them coming, and heard them speaking of Nicolette as they went, and threatening to slay her.

"God," quoth he, "this were great pity to slay so fair a maid! Right great charity it were if I could say aught to her, and they perceive it not, and she should be on her guard against them, for if they slay her, then were Aucassin, my damoiseau, dead, and that were great pity."

Here one singeth:—

Valiant was the sentinel,
Courteous, kind, and practiced well,
So a song did sing and tell,
Of the peril that befell.
"Maiden fair that lingerest here,
Gentle maid of merry cheer,
Hair of gold, and eyes as clear
As the water in a mere,
Thou, meseems, hast spoken word
To thy lover and thy lord,
That would die for thee, his dear;
Now beware the ill accord
Of the cloaked men of the sword:
These have sworn, and keep their word,
They will put thee to the sword
Save thou take heed!"

Nicolette Builds her Lodge

Nicolette, the bright of brow,
From the shepherds doth she pass
All below the blossomed bough
Where an ancient way there was,
Overgrown and choked with grass,
Till she found the cross-roads where
Seven paths do all way fare;
Then she deemeth she will try,
Should her lover pass thereby,
If he love her loyally.
So she gathered white lilies,
Oak-leaf, that in greenwood is,
Leaves of many a branch, iwis,
Therewith built a lodge of green,
Goodlier was never seen.
Swore by God, who may not lie:
«If my love the lodge should spy,
He will rest a while thereby
If he love me loyally.»
Thus his faith she deemed to try,
«Or I love him not, not I,
Nor he loves me!»

Aucassin, Seeking Nicolette, Comes upon a Cowherd

Aucassin fared through the forest from path to path after Nicolette, and his horse bare him furiously. Think ye not that the thorns him spared, nor the briars, nay, not so, but tare his raiment, that scarce a knot might be tied with the soundest part thereof, and the blood spurted from his arms, and flanks, and legs, in forty places, or thirty, so that behind the Childe men might follow on the track of his blood in the grass. But so much he went in thoughts of Nicolette, his lady sweet, that he felt no pain nor torment, and all the day hurled through the forest in this fashion nor heard no word of her. And when he saw vespers draw nigh, he began to weep for that he found her not. All down an old road, and grass-grown, he fared, when anon, looking along the way before him, he saw such an one as I shall tell you. Tall was he, and great of growth, ugly and hideous: his head huge, and blacker than charcoal, and more than the breadth of a hand between his two eyes; and he had great cheeks, and a big nose and flat, big nostrils and wide, and thick lips redder than steak, and great teeth yellow and ugly, and he was shod with hosen and shoon of ox-hide, bound with cords of bark up over the knee, and all about him a great cloak two-fold; and he leaned upon a grievous cudgel, and Aucassin came unto him, and was afraid when he beheld him.

Aucassin Finds Nicolette's Lodge

So THEY parted from each other, and Aucassin rode on; the night was fair and still, and so long he went that he came to the lodge of boughs that Nicolette had builded and woven within and without, over and under, with flowers, and it was the fairest lodge that might be seen. When Aucassin was ware of it, he stopped suddenly, and the light of the moon fell therein.

«Forsooth!» quoth Aucassin, «here was Nicolette, my sweet lady, and this lodge builded she with her fair hands. For the sweetness of it, and for love of her, will I now alight, and rest here this night long.»

He drew forth his foot from the stirrup to alight, and the steed was great and tall. He dreamed so much on Nicolette, his right sweet friend, that he fell heavily upon a stone, and drave his shoulder out of its place. Then knew he that he was hurt sore; nathless he bore him with that force he might, and fastened his horse with the other hand to a thorn. Then turned he on his side, and crept backwise into the lodge of boughs. And he looked through a gap in the lodge and saw the stars in heaven, and one that was brighter than the rest; so began he to say:—

Here one singeth:—

«Star, that I from far behold,
Star the moon calls to her fold,
Nicolette with thee doth dwell,
My sweet love, with locks of gold.
God would have her dwell afar,
Dwell with him for evening star.
Would to God, whate'er befell,
Would that with her I might dwell.
I would clip her close and strait;
Nay, were I of much estate,
Some king's son desirable,

Worthy she to be my mate,
Me to kiss and clip me well,
Sister, sweet friend!»

So speak they, say they, tell they The Tale.

When Nicolette heard Aucassin, she came to him, for she was not far away. She passed within the lodge, and threw her arms about his neck, clipped him and kissed him.

«Fair, sweet friend, welcome be thou!»

«And thou, fair, sweet love, be thou welcome!»

So either kissed and clipped the other, and fair joy was them between.

«Ha! sweet love,» quoth Aucassin, «but now was I sore hurt, and my shoulder wried, but I take no heed of it, nor have no hurt therefrom, since I have thee.»

Right so felt she his shoulder and found it was wried from its place. And she so handled it with her white hands, and so wrought in her surgery, that by God's will who loveth lovers, it went back into its place. Then took she flowers, and fresh grass, and leaves green, and bound them on the hurt with a strip of her smock, and he was all healed.

NICOLETTE SAILS TO CARTHAGE

When all they of the court heard her speak thus, that she was daughter to the king of Carthage, they knew well that she spake truly; so made they great joy of her, and led her to the castle with great honor, as a king's daughter. And they would have given her to her lord a king of Paynim, but she had no mind to marry. There dwelt she three days or four. And she considered by what device she might seek for Aucassin. Then she got her a viol, and learned to play on it; till they would have married her one day to a rich king of Paynim, and she stole forth by night, and came to the seaport, and dwelt with a poor woman thereby. Then took she a certain herb, and therewith smeared her head and her face, till she was all brown and stained. And she had a coat, and mantle, and smock, and breeches made, and attired herself as if she had been a minstrel. So took she the viol and went to a mariner, and so wrought on him that he took her aboard his vessel. Then hoisted they sail, and fared on the high seas even till they came to the land of Provence. And

Nicolette went forth and took the viol, and went playing through all the country, even till she came to the castle of Beaucaire, where Aucassin was.

Here singeth one:—

At Beaucaire below the tower
Sat Aucassin on an hour,
Heard the bird, and watched the flower,
With his barons him beside.
Then came on him in that tide
The sweet influence of love
And the memory thereof;
Thought of Nicolette the fair,
And the dainty face of her
He had loved so many years.
Then was he in dule and tears!
Even then came Nicolette;
On the stair a foot she set,
And she drew the viol bow
O'er the strings and chanted so:—
«Listen, lords and knights, to me,
Lords of high or low degree,
To my story list will ye
All of Aucassin and her
That was Nicolette the fair?
And their love was long to tell;
Deep woods through he sought her well:
Paynims took them on a day
In Torelore, and bound they lay.
Of Aucassin naught know we,
But fair Nicolette the free
   Now in Carthage doth she dwell;
   There her father loves her well,
Who is king of that countrie.
Her a husband hath he found,
Paynim lord that serves Mahound!
Ne'er with him the maid will go,
For she loves a damoiseau,
Aucassin, that ye may know,
Swears to God that never mo
With a lover will she go
Save with him she loveth so
      In long desire.»

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

(1780–1851)

The fame of this celebrated naturalist rests on one magnificent book, ‘The Birds of America,’ for which all his life may be said to have been a preparation, and which certainly surpasses in interest every other ornithological publication. For fifteen years before he thought of making use of his collections in this way, he annually went alone with his gun and his drawing materials into deep and unexplored forests and through wild regions of country, making long journeys on foot and counting nothing a hardship that added to his specimens. This passion had controlled him from early childhood. His father, a Frenchman, was living in New Orleans at the time of Audubon's birth in 1780, and with the view of helping him in his studies, sent him to Paris when he was fifteen years old, where he entered the drawing-class of David the painter. He remained there two years; and it was after his return that he made his memorable excursions, his home being then a farm at Mill Grove, near Philadelphia.

In 1808 he removed with his family to the West, still continuing his researches. Several years later he returned to Philadelphia with a portfolio of nearly a thousand colored drawings of birds. What befell them — a parallel to so many like incidents, as through Warburton's cook, Newton's dog, Carlyle's friend, and Edward Livingston's fire, that they seem one of the appointed tests of moral fibre — is best told in Audubon's own language:—

«An accident,» he says, «which happened to two hundred of my original drawings, nearly put a stop to my researches in ornithology. I shall relate it, merely to show how far enthusiasm — for by no other name can I call my perseverance — may enable the preserver of nature to surmount the most disheartening difficulties. I left the village of Henderson, in Kentucky, situated on the banks of the Ohio, where I resided for several years, to proceed to Philadelphia on business. I looked to my drawings before my departure, placed them carefully in a wooden box, and gave them in charge of a relative, with injunctions to see that no injury should happen to them. My absence was of several months; and when I returned, after having enjoyed the pleasures of home for a few days, I inquired after my box, and what I was pleased to call my treasure. The box was produced and opened; but, reader, feel for me, — a pair of Norway rats had taken possession of the whole, and reared a young family among the gnawed bits of paper, which, but a month previous, represented nearly a thousand inhabitants of air! The burning heat which instantly rushed through my brain was too great to be

J. J. AUDUBON.

endured without affecting my whole nervous system. I slept not for several nights, and the days passed like days of oblivion;—until, the animal powers being recalled into action through the strength of my constitution, I took up my gun, my note-book, and my pencils, and went forth to the woods as gayly as if nothing had happened. I felt pleased that I might now make better drawings than before; and ere a period not exceeding three years had elapsed, my portfolio was again filled.»

In 1826 he sailed for Europe to exhibit his newly collected treasures to foreign ornithologists. He succeeded in obtaining pecuniary aid in publishing the work, and plates were made in England. The book was published in New York in four volumes (elephant folio) in 1830–39. The birds are life-size. ‹The American Ornithological Biography,› which is the text for the plates, was published in Edinburgh, 1831–39, in five octavo volumes. Accompanied by his two sons he started on new excursions, which resulted in ‹The Quadrupeds of America,› with a ‹Biography of American Quadrupeds,› both published at Philadelphia, beginning in 1840. During that year he built a house for himself in the upper part of New York, in what is now called Audubon Park, and died there January 27th, 1851.

Audubon's descriptive text is not unworthy of his plates: his works are far from being mere tenders to picture-books. He is full of enthusiasm, his descriptions of birds and animals are vivid and realizing, and his adventures are told with much spirit and considerable literary skill, though some carelessness of syntax.

A DANGEROUS ADVENTURE

From ‹The American Ornithological Biography›

On my return from the Upper Mississippi, I found myself obliged to cross one of the wide prairies which, in that portion of the United States, vary the appearance of the country. The weather was fine, all around me was as fresh and blooming as if it had just issued from the bosom of nature. My knapsack, my gun, and my dog, were all I had for baggage and company. But although well moccasined, I moved slowly along, attracted by the brilliancy of the flowers, and the gambols of the fawns around their dams, to all appearance as thoughtless of danger as I felt myself.

My march was of long duration; I saw the sun sinking beneath the horizon long before I could perceive any appearance of woodland, and nothing in the shape of man had I met with that day. The track which I followed was only an old Indian trace; and, as darkness overshadowed the prairie, I felt some desire to reach at least a copse, in which I might lie down to rest. The night-hawks were skimming over and around me, attracted by the buzzing wings of the beetles which formed their food, and the distant howling of wolves gave me some hope that I should soon arrive at the skirts of some woodland.

I did so, and almost at the same instant a fire-light attracting my eye, I moved toward it, full of confidence that it proceeded from the camp of some wandering Indians. I was mistaken. I discovered by its glare that it was from the hearth of a small log cabin, and that a tall figure passed and repassed between it and me, as if busily engaged in household arrangements.

I reached the spot, and presenting myself at the door, asked the tall figure, which proved to be a woman, if I might take shelter under her roof for the night. Her voice was gruff, and her attire negligently thrown about her. She answered in the affirmative. I walked in, took a wooden stool, and quietly seated myself by the fire. The next object that attracted my notice was a finely formed young Indian, resting his head between his hands, with his elbows on his knees. A long bow rested against the log wall near him, while a quantity of arrows and two or three raccoon skins lay at his feet. He moved not; he apparently breathed not. Accustomed to the habits of the Indians, and knowing that they pay little attention to the approach of civilized strangers (a circumstance which in some countries is considered as evincing the apathy of their character), I addressed him in French, a language not unfrequently partially known to the people in that neighborhood. He raised his head, pointed to one of his eyes with his finger, and gave me a significant glance with the other. His face was covered with blood. The fact was, that an hour before this, as he was in the act of discharging an arrow at a raccoon in the top of a tree, the arrow had split upon the cord, and sprung back with such violence into his right eye as to destroy it forever.

Feeling hungry, I inquired what sort of fare I might expect. Such a thing as a bed was not to be seen, but many large untanned bear and buffalo hides lay piled in a corner. I drew a fine timepiece from my breast, and told the woman that it was late, and that I was fatigued. She had espied my watch, the richness of which seemed to operate upon her feelings with electric quickness. She told me that there was plenty of venison and jerked buffalo meat, and that on removing the ashes I should find a cake. But my watch had struck her fancy, and her curiosity had to be gratified by an immediate sight of it. I took off the gold chain that secured it, from around my neck, and presented it to her. She was all ecstasy, spoke of its beauty, asked me its value, and put the chain round her brawny neck, saying how happy the possession of such a watch should make her. Thoughtless, and as I fancied myself, in so retired a spot, secure, I paid little attention to her talk or her movements. I helped my dog to a good supper of venison, and was not long in satisfying the demands of my own appetite.

The Indian rose from his seat, as if in extreme suffering. He passed me and repassed me several times, and once pinched me on the side so violently that the pain nearly brought forth an exclamation of anger. I looked at him. His eye met mine; but his look was so forbidding that it struck a chill into the more nervous part of my system. He again seated himself, drew his butcher-knife from its greasy scabbard, examined its edge, as I would do that of a razor suspected dull, replaced it, and again taking his tomahawk from his back, filled the pipe of it with tobacco, and sent me expressive glances whenever our hostess chanced to have her back towards us.

Never until that moment had my senses been awakened to the danger which I now suspected to be about me. I returned glance for glance to my companion, and rested well assured that whatever enemies I might have, he was not of their number.

I asked the woman for my watch, wound it up, and under pretense of wishing to see how the weather might probably be on the morrow, took up my gun, and walked out of the cabin. I slipped a ball into each barrel, scraped the edges of my flints, renewed the primings, and returning to the hut, gave a favorable account of my observations. I took a few bear-skins, made a pallet of them, and calling my faithful dog to my side, lay down, with my gun close to my body, and in a few minutes was to all appearance fast asleep.

A short time had elapsed, when some voices were heard; and from the corner of my eyes I saw two athletic youths making their entrance, bearing a dead stag on a pole. They disposed of their burden, and asking for whisky, helped themselves freely to it. Observing me and the wounded Indian, they asked who I was, and why the devil that rascal (meaning the Indian, who, they knew, understood not a word of English) was in the house. The mother—for so she proved to be—bade them speak less loudly, made mention of my watch, and took them to a corner, where a conversation took place, the purport of which it required little shrewdness in me to guess. I tapped my dog gently. He moved his tail, and with indescribable pleasure I saw his fine eyes alternately fixed on me and raised toward the trio in the corner. I felt that he perceived danger in my situation. The Indian exchanged a last glance with me.

The lads had eaten and drunk themselves into such condition that I already looked upon them as *hors de combat;* and the frequent visits of the whisky bottle to the ugly mouth of their dam I hoped would soon reduce her to a like state. Judge of my astonishment, reader, when I saw this incarnate fiend take a large carving-knife and go to the grindstone to whet its edge. I saw her pour the water on the turning machine, and watched her working away with the dangerous instrument, until the cold sweat covered every part of my body, in spite of my determination to defend myself to the last. Her task finished, she walked to her reeling sons, and said, "There, that'll soon settle him! Boys, kill yon——, and then for the watch."

I turned, cocked my gunlocks silently, touched my faithful companion, and lay ready to start up and shoot the first one who might attempt my life. The moment was fast approaching, and that night might have been my last in the world, had not Providence made preparations for my rescue. All was ready. The infernal hag was advancing slowly, probably contemplating the best way of dispatching me, while her sons should be engaged with the Indian. I was several times on the point of rising and shooting her on the spot;—but she was not to be punished thus. The door was suddenly opened, and there entered two stout travelers, each with a long rifle on his shoulder. I bounced up on my feet, and making them most heartily welcome, told them how well it was for me that they should have arrived at that moment. The tale was told in a minute. The drunken sons were secured, and the woman, in spite of her defense and vociferations, shared the same fate. The Indian fairly danced with joy, and gave us to understand that as he could not sleep for pain, he would watch over us. You may suppose we slept much less than we talked. The two strangers gave me an account of their once having been themselves in a somewhat similar situation.

Day came, fair and rosy, and with it the punishment of our captives. They were now quite sobered. Their feet were unbound, but their arms were still securely tied. We marched them into the woods off the road, and having used them as Regulators were wont to use such delinquents, we set fire to the cabin, gave all the skins and implements to the young Indian warrior, and proceeded, well pleased, towards the settlements.

During upward of twenty-five years, when my wanderings extended to all parts of our country, this was the only time at which my life was in danger from my fellow-creatures. Indeed, so little risk do travelers run in the United States, that no one born there ever dreams of any to be encountered on the road, and I can only account for this occurrence by supposing that the inhabitants of the cabin were not Americans.

Will you believe, good-natured reader, that not many miles from the place where this adventure happened, and where fifteen years ago, no habitation belonging to civilized man was expected, and very few ever seen, large roads are now laid out, cultivation has converted the woods into fertile fields, taverns have been erected, and much of what we Americans call comfort is to be met with! So fast does improvement proceed in our abundant and free country.

BERTHOLD AUERBACH

(1812–1882)

The author of ‹Black Forest Village Stories› and ‹On the Heights› stands out in honorable individuality among modern German novelists, even if the latest fashions in fiction make his work already a little antiquated. Auerbach's biography is one of industry rather than of incident. His birth was humble. His life was long. He wrote voluminously and was widely popular, to be half forgotten within a decade after his death. He may perhaps be reckoned the founder of a contemporary German school of *tendenz* novel writers; a school now so much diminished that Spielhagen—who, however, wears Auerbach's mantle with a difference—is its only survivor.

Of Jewish parentage, his birthplace being Nordstetten, Würtemberg (1812), Auerbach drifted from preparation for the synagogue toward law, philosophy, and literature. The study of Spinoza (whose works he translated) gave form to his convictions concerning human life. It led him to spend his literary talents on materials so various as the homely simplicity of peasant scenes and peasant souls, on the one hand, and on the other the popularization of a high social and ethical philosophy, specially inculcated through his larger fictions. His college education was obtained at Tübingen, Munich, and Heidelberg.

Necessity rather than ambition prompted him to write, and he wrote as long as he lived. A partial list of his works begins with a pseudonymous 'Life of Frederick the Great' (1834–36), and 'Das Judenthum und der Neuste Literatur' (The Jew Element in Recent Literature: 1836), and passes to the semi-biographic novel 'Spinoza' (1837), afterward supplemented with 'Ein Denkerleben' (A Thinker's Life), 'Dichter und Kaufman' (Poet and Merchant: 1839), — stories belonging to the 'Ghetto Series,' embodying Jewish and German life in the time of Moses Mendelssohn; the translation in five volumes of Spinoza's philosophy, with a critical biography, 1841; and in 1842 another work intended to popularize philosophy, 'Der Gebildete Bürger: ein Buch für den Denkenden Menschen' (The Clever Townsman: a Book for Thinking Men).

BERTHOLD AUERBACH

In 1843 came the first set of the famous 'Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten' (Black Forest Village Stories), followed by a second group in 1848. These won instant and wide favor, and were widely translated. They rank among the author's most pleasing and successful productions, stamped as they are with that truth which a writer like Auerbach, or a painter like Defregger or Schmidt, can express when sitting down to deal with the scenes and folk which from early youth have been photographed upon his heart and memory. In 1856 there followed in the same descriptive field his 'Barfüssele' (Little Barefoot), 'Joseph im Schnee' (Joseph in the Snow: 1861), and 'Edelweiss' (1861). His writings of this date — tales, sketches journalistic, political, and dramatic, and other papers — reveal Auerbach's varying moods or enthusiasms, chronicle his residence in different German or Austrian cities, and are comparatively insignificant among his forty or more volumes. Nor is much to be said of his first long fiction, 'Neues Leben' (New Life).

But with 'Auf der Höhe' (On the Heights), a philosophic romance of court life in the capital and the royal country seat of a considerable German kingdom (by no means merely imaginary), inwoven with a minute study of peasant life and character, Auerbach's popular reputation was established. His plan of making ethics the chief end of a novel was here exhibited at its best; he never again showed the same force of conception which got his imperfect literary art forgiven. Another long novel, not less doctrinaire in scope, but dealing with quite different materials and problems, 'Das Landhaus am Rhein' (The Villa on the Rhine), was issued in 1868; and was followed by 'Waldfried,' a long, patriotic, and on the whole inert, study of a German family from 1848 until the close of the Franco-Prussian War.

In spite of his untiring industry, Auerbach produced little more of consequence, though he wrote a new series of Black Forest sketches: 'Nach Dreissig Jahren' (After Thirty Years: 1876); 'Der Forstmeister' (The Head Forester: 1879); and 'Brigitta' (1880). The close of his life was much embittered by the growth of the anti-Semitic sentiment; and his residence in Germany was merely nominal. He died at Cannes, France, in 1882.

'On the Heights' is doubtless Auerbach's best representative. 'The Villa on the Rhine' is in a lower key, with less appealing types, and less attractive local color. Moreover, it is weighted with more philosophizing, and its movement is slower. In 'On the Heights' the emotional situations are strong. In spite of sentimentality, a true feeling animates its technique. The atmosphere of a German royal residence, as he reveals it, appears almost as heavy as the real thing. Auerbach's humor is leaden; he finds it necessary to explain his own attempts at it. But the peasant-nurse Walpurga, her husband Hansei, and the aged grandmother in the family, are admirable delineations. The heroine, Irma von Wildenort, is genuinely human. The story of her abrupt atonement for a lapse from her better self, the gradual process of her fantastic expiation and of her self-redemption,—through the deliberate sacrifice of all that belongs to her treacherous past,—her successful struggle into a high ethical life and knowledge of herself (the element which gives the book its force), offer much that is consistent, and appealing and elevating to the conscience.

Auerbach crowds material into the book, tangles up too many different skeins of plot, offers too many types to study and interests to follow, and betrays a want of perspective in its construction. But in spite of all its defects it is a novel that should not be forgotten. For reflective readers it will always hold a charm, and its latent strength is proved by its triumph over its own faults.

THE FIRST MASS

From ‹Ivo the Gentleman,› in ‹Black Forest Village Stories›

ONE Saturday afternoon the busy sound of hammer and adze was heard on the green hill-top which served the good folks of Nordstetten as their open-air gathering-place. Valentine the carpenter, with his two sons, was making a scaffolding, designed to serve no less a purpose than that of an altar and a pulpit. Gregory, the son of Christian the tailor, was to officiate at his first mass and preach his first sermon.

Ivo, Valentine's youngest son, a child of six years of age, assisted his father with a mien which betokened that he considered his services indispensable. With his bare head and feet he ran up and down the timbers as nimbly as a squirrel. When a beam was being lifted, he cried, «Pry under!» as lustily as any one, put his shoulder to the crowbar, and puffed as if nine-tenths of the weight fell upon him. Valentine liked to see his little boy employed. He would tell him to wind the twine on the reel, to carry the tools where they were wanted, or to rake the chips into a heap. Ivo obeyed all these directions with the zeal and devotion of a self-sacrificing patriot. Once, when he perched upon the end of a plank for the purpose of weighing it down, the motion of the saw shook his every limb, and made him laugh aloud in spite of himself; he would have fallen off but for the eagerness with which he held on to his position and endeavored to perform his task in the most workmanlike manner.

At last the scaffolding was finished. Lewis the saddler was ready to nail down the carpets and hanging. Ivo offered to help him too; but being gruffly repelled, he sat down upon his heap of chips, and looked at the mountains, behind which the sun was setting in a sea of fire. His father's whistle aroused him, and he ran to his side.

«Father,» said Ivo, «I wish I was in Hochdorf.»

«Why?»

«Because it's so near to heaven, and I should like to climb up once.»

«You silly boy, it only seems as if heaven began there. From Hochdorf it is a long way to Stuttgart, and from there it is a long way to heaven yet.

«How long?»

"Well, you can't get there until you die."

Leading his little son with one hand, and carrying his tools in the other, Valentine passed through the village. Washing and scouring was going on everywhere, and chairs and tables stood before the houses,—for every family expected visitors for the great occasion of the morrow.

As Valentine passed Christian the tailor's, he held his hand to his cap, prepared to take it off if anybody should look out. But nobody did so: the place was silent as a cloister. Some farmers' wives were going in, carrying bowls covered with their aprons, while others passed out with empty bowls under their arms. They nodded to each other without speaking: they had brought wedding-presents for the young clergyman, who was to be married to his bride—the Church.

As the vesper-bell rang, Valentine released the hand of his son, who quickly folded his hands; Valentine also brought his hands together over his heavy tools and said an Ave.

Next morning a clear, bright day rose upon the village. Ivo was dressed by his mother betimes in a new jacket of striped Manchester cloth, with buttons which he took for silver, and a newly-washed pair of leathern breeches. He was to carry the crucifix. Gretchen, Ivo's eldest sister, took him by the hand and led him into the street, "so as to have room in the house." Having enjoined upon him by no means to go back, she returned hastily. Wherever he came he found the men standing in knots in the road. They were but half dressed for the festival, having no coats on, but displaying their dazzling white shirt-sleeves. Here and there women or girls were to be seen running from house to house without bodices, and with their hair half untied. Ivo thought it cruel in his sister to have pushed him out of the house as she had done. He would have been delighted to have appeared like the grown folks,—first in negligée, and then in full dress amid the tolling of bells and the clang of trumpets; but he did not dare to return, or even to sit down anywhere, for fear of spoiling his clothes. He went through the village almost on tiptoe. Wagon after wagon rumbled in, bringing farmers and farmers' wives from abroad; at the houses people welcomed them, and brought chairs to assist them in getting down. All the world looked as exultingly quiet and glad as a community preparing to receive a hero who had gone forth from their midst and was returning after a victory. From the church to the hill-top the road was strewn with flowers and grass, which sent forth aromatic odors. The squire was seen coming out of Christian the tailor's, and only covered his head when he found himself in the middle of the street. Soges had a new sword, brightly japanned and glittering in the sun.

The squire's wife soon followed, leading her daughter Barbara, who was but six years old, by the hand. Barbara was dressed in bridal array. She wore the veil and the wreath upon her head, and a beautiful gown. As an immaculate virgin, she was intended to represent the bride of the young clergyman, the Church.

At the first sound of the bell the people in shirt-sleeves disappeared as if by magic. They retired to their houses to finish their toilet: Ivo went on to the church.

Amid the ringing of all the bells, the procession at last issued from the church-door. The pennons waved, the band of music brought from Horb struck up, and the audible prayers of the men and women mingled with the sound. Ivo, with the schoolmaster at his side, took the lead, carrying the crucifix. On the hill the altar was finely decorated; the chalices and the lamps and the spangled dresses of the saints flashed in the sun, and the throng of worshipers covered the common and the adjoining fields as far as the eye could reach. Ivo hardly took courage to look at the "gentleman," meaning the young clergyman, who, in his gold-laced robe, and bare head crowned with a golden wreath, ascended the steps of the altar with pale and sober mien, bowing low as the music swelled, and folding his small white hands upon his breast. The squire's Barbara, who carried a burning taper wreathed with rosemary, had gone before him and took her stand at the side of the altar. The mass began; and at the tinkling of the bell all fell upon their faces, and not a sound would have been heard, had not a flight of pigeons passed directly over the altar with that fluttering and chirping noise which always accompanies their motion through the air. For all the world Ivo would not have looked up just then; for he knew that the Holy Ghost was descending, to effect the mysterious transubstantiation of the wine into blood and the bread into flesh, and that no mortal eye can look upon Him without being struck with blindness.

The chaplain of Horb now entered the pulpit, and solemnly addressed the "permitiant."

Then the latter took his place. Ivo sat near by, on a stool; with his right arm resting on his knee, and his chin upon his hand, he listened attentively. He understood little of the sermon; but his eyes hung upon the preacher's lips, and his mind followed his intentions if not his thoughts.

When the procession returned to the church amid the renewed peal of the bells and triumphant strains of music, Ivo clasped the crucifix firmly with both his hands; he felt as if new strength had been given him to carry his God before him.

As the crowd dispersed, every one spoke in raptures of the «gentleman» and of the happiness of the parents of such a son. Christian the tailor and his wife came down the covered stairs of the church-hill in superior bliss. Ordinarily they attracted little attention in the village; but on this occasion all crowded around them with the greatest reverence, to present their congratulations. The young clergyman's mother returned thanks with tearful eyes; she could scarcely speak for joyous weeping. Ivo heard his cousin, who had come over from Rexingen, say that Gregory's parents were now obliged to address their son with the formal pronoun «they,» by which strangers and great personages are spoken to, instead of the simple «thee and thou,» by which German villagers converse with each other.

«Is that so, mother?» he asked.

«Of course,» was the answer: «he's more than other folks now.»

With all their enthusiasm, the good people did not forget the pecuniary advantage gained by Christian the tailor. It was said that he need take no further trouble all his life. Cordele, Gregory's sister, was to be her brother's housekeeper, and her brother was a fortune to his family and an honor to all the village.

Translation of Charles Goepp.

The following passages from 'On the Heights' are reprinted by consent of Henry Holt & Co., holders of the copyright of the translation.

THE PEASANT-NURSE AND THE PRINCE

«There, my boy! Now you've seen the sun. May you see it for seven and seventy years to come, and when they've run their course, may the Lord grant you a new lease of life. Last night they lit millions of lamps for your sake. But they were nothing to the sun up in heaven, which the Lord himself lighted for you this very morning. Be a good boy, always, so that you may deserve to have the sun shine on you. Yes, now the angel's whispering to you. Laugh while you sleep! That's right. There's one angel belongs to you on earth, and that's your mother! And you're mine, too! You're mine, indeed!»

Thus spake Walpurga, the nurse, her voice soft, yet full of emotion, while she gazed into the face of the child that lay in her lap. Her soul was already swayed by that mysterious bond of affection which never fails to develop itself in the heart of the foster-mother. It is a noble trait in human nature, that we love those on whom we can confer a kindness. Their whole life gradually becomes interwoven with our own.

Walpurga became oblivious of herself and of all that was dear to her in the cottage by the lake. She was now needed here, where a young life had been assigned to her loving charge.

She looked up at Mademoiselle Kramer, with beaming eyes, and met a joyful glance in return.

«It seems to me,» said Walpurga, «that a palace is just like a church. One has only good and pious thoughts here; and all the people are so kind and frank.»

Mademoiselle Kramer suddenly smiled and replied:—

«My dear child—»

«Don't call me 'child'! I'm not a child! I'm a mother!»

«But here, in the great world, you are only a child. A court is a strange place. Some go hunting, others go fishing; one builds, another paints; one studies a rôle, another a piece of music; a dancer learns a new step, an author writes a new book. Every one in the land is doing something—cooking or baking, drilling or practicing, writing, painting, or dancing—simply in order that the king and queen may be entertained.»

«I understand you,» said Walpurga; and Mademoiselle Kramer continued:—

«My family has been in the service of the court for sixteen generations;»—six would have been the right number, but sixteen sounded so much better;—«my father is the governor of the summer palace, and I was born there. I know all about the court, and can teach you a great deal.»

«And I'll be glad to learn,» interposed Walpurga.

«Do you imagine that every one is kindly disposed towards you? Take my word for it, a palace contains people of all sorts, good and bad. All the vices abound in such a place. And there are many other matters of which you have no idea, and of which you will, I trust, ever remain ignorant. But all you meet are wondrous polite. Try to remain just as you now are, and when you leave the palace, let it be as the same Walpurga you were when you came here.»

Walpurga stared at her in surprise. Who could change her?

Word came that the Queen was awake and desired Walpurga to bring the Crown Prince to her.

Accompanied by Doctor Gunther, Mademoiselle Kramer, and two waiting-women, she proceeded to the Queen's bedchamber. The Queen lay there, calm and beautiful, and with a smile of greeting, turned her face towards those who had entered. The curtains had been partially drawn aside, and a broad, slanting ray of light shone into the apartment, which seemed still more peaceful than during the breathless silence of the previous night.

«Good morning!» said the Queen, with a voice full of feeling. «Let me have my child!» She looked down at the babe that rested in her arms, and then, without noticing any one in the room, lifted her glance on high and faintly murmured:—

«This is the first time I behold my child in the daylight!»

All were silent; it seemed as if there was naught in the apartment except the broad slanting ray of light that streamed in at the window.

«Have you slept well?» inquired the Queen. Walpurga was glad the Queen had asked a question, for now she could answer. Casting a hurried glance at Mademoiselle Kramer, she said:—

«Yes, indeed! Sleep's the first, the last, and the best thing in the world.»

«She's clever,» said the Queen, addressing Doctor Gunther in French.

Walpurga's heart sank within her. Whenever she heard them speak French, she felt as if they were betraying her; as if they had put on an invisible cap, like that worn by the goblins in the fairy-tale, and could thus speak without being heard.

«Did the Prince sleep well?» asked the Queen.

Walpurga passed her hand over her face, as if to brush away a spider that had been creeping there. The Queen doesn't speak of her «child» or her «son,» but only of «the Crown Prince.»

Walpurga answered:—

«Yes, quite well, thank God! That is, I couldn't hear him, and I only wanted to say that I'd like to act towards the—» she could not say «the Prince»—«that is, towards him, as I'd do with my own child. We began on the very first day. My mother taught me that. Such a child has a will of its own from the very start, and it won't do to give way to it. It won't do to take it from the cradle, or to feed it, whenever it pleases; there ought to be regular times for all those things. It'll soon get used to that, and it won't harm it either, to let it cry once in a while. On the contrary, that expands the chest.»

«Does he cry?» asked the Queen.

The infant answered the question for itself, for it at once began to cry most lustily.

«Take him and quiet him,» begged the Queen.

The King entered the apartment before the child had stopped crying.

«He will have a good voice of command,» said he, kissing the Queen's hand.

Walpurga quieted the child, and she and Mademoiselle Kramer were sent back to their apartments.

The King informed the Queen of the dispatches that had been received, and of the sponsors who had been decided upon. She was perfectly satisfied with the arrangements that had been made.

When Walpurga had returned to her room and had placed the child in the cradle, she walked up and down and seemed quite agitated.

«There are no angels in this world!» said she. «They're all just like the rest of us, and who knows but—» She was vexed at the Queen: «Why won't she listen patiently when her child cries? We must take all our children bring us, whether it be joy or pain.»

She stepped out into the passage-way and heard the tones of the organ in the palace-chapel. For the first time in her life these sounds displeased her. «It don't belong in the house,» thought she, «where all sorts of things are going on. The church ought to stand by itself.»

When she returned to the room, she found a stranger there. Mademoiselle Kramer informed her that this was the tailor to the Queen.

Walpurga laughed outright at the notion of a «tailor to the Queen.» The elegantly attired person looked at her in amazement, while Mademoiselle Kramer explained to her that this was the dressmaker to her Majesty the Queen, and that he had come to take her measure for three new dresses.

«Am I to wear city clothes?»

«God forbid! You're to wear the dress of your neighborhood, and can order a stomacher in red, blue, green, or any color that you like best.»

«I hardly know what to say; but I'd like to have a workday suit too. Sunday clothes on week-days—that won't do.»

«At court one always wears Sunday clothes, and when her Majesty drives out again you will have to accompany her.»

«All right, then. I won't object.»

While he took her measure, Walpurga laughed incessantly, and he was at last obliged to ask her to hold still, so that he might go on with his work. Putting his measure into his pocket, he informed Mademoiselle Kramer that he had ordered an exact model, and that the master of ceremonies had favored him with several drawings, so that there might be no doubt of success.

Finally he asked permission to see the Crown Prince. Mademoiselle Kramer was about to let him do so, but Walpurga objected. «Before the child is christened,» said she, «no one shall look at it just out of curiosity, and least of all a tailor, or else the child will never turn out the right sort of man.»

The tailor took his leave, Mademoiselle Kramer having politely hinted to him that nothing could be done with the superstition of the lower orders, and that it would not do to irritate the nurse.

This occurrence induced Walpurga to administer the first serious reprimand to Mademoiselle Kramer. She could not understand why she was so willing to make an exhibition of the child. «Nothing does a child more harm than to let strangers look at it in its sleep, and a tailor at that.»

All the wild fun with which, in popular songs, tailors are held up to scorn and ridicule, found vent in Walpurga, and she began singing:—

«Just list, ye braves, who love to roam!
A snail was chasing a tailor home.
And if Old Shears hadn't run so fast,
The snail would surely have caught him at last.»

Mademoiselle Kramer's acquaintance with the court tailor had lowered her in Walpurga's esteem; and with an evident effort to mollify the latter, Mademoiselle Kramer asked:—

«Does the idea of your new and beautiful clothes really afford you no pleasure?»

«To be frank with you, no! I don't wear them for my own sake, but for that of others, who dress me to please themselves. It's all the same to me, however! I've given myself up to them, and suppose I must submit.»

«May I come in?» asked a pleasant voice. Countess Irma entered the room. Extending both her hands to Walpurga, she said:—

«God greet you, my countrywoman! I am also from the Highlands, seven hours distance from your village. I know it well, and once sailed over the lake with your father. Does he still live?»

«Alas! no: he was drowned, and the lake hasn't given up its dead.»

«He was a fine-looking old man, and you are the very image of him.»

«I am glad to find some one else here who knew my father. The court tailor—I mean the court doctor—knew him too. Yes, search the land through, you couldn't have found a better man than my father, and no one can help but admit it.»

«Yes: I've often heard as much.»

«May I ask your Ladyship's name?»

«Countess Wildenort.»

«Wildenort? I've heard the name before. Yes, I remember my mother's mentioning it. Your father was known as a very kind and benevolent man. Has he been dead a long while?»

«No, he is still living.»

«Is he here too?»

«No.»

«And as what are you here, Countess?»

«As maid of honor.»

«And what is that?»

«Being attached to the Queen's person; or what, in your part of the country, would be called a companion.»

«Indeed! And is your father willing to let them use you that way?»

Irma, who was somewhat annoyed by her questions, said:—

«I wished to ask you something—Can you write?»

«I once could, but I've quite forgotten how.»

«Then I've just hit it! that's the very reason for my coming here. Now, whenever you wish to write home, you can dictate your letter to me, and I will write whatever you tell me to.»

«I could have done that too,» suggested Mademoiselle Kramer, timidly; «and your Ladyship would not have needed to trouble yourself.»

«No, the Countess will write for me. Shall it be now?»

«Certainly.»

But Walpurga had to go to the child. While she was in the next room, Countess Irma and Mademoiselle Kramer engaged each other in conversation.

When Walpurga returned, she found Irma, pen in hand, and at once began to dictate.

Translation of S. A. Stern.

THE FIRST FALSE STEP

From ‹On the Heights›

The ball was to be given in the palace and the adjoining winter garden. The intendant now informed Irma of his plan, and was delighted to find that she approved of it. At the end of the garden he intended to erect a large fountain, ornamented with antique groups. In the foreground he meant to have trees and shrubbery and various kinds of rocks, so that none could approach too closely; and the background was to be a Grecian landscape, painted in the grand style.

Irma promised to keep his secret. Suddenly she exclaimed, «We are all of us no better than lackeys and kitchen-maids. We are kept busy stewing, roasting, and cooking for weeks, in order to prepare a dish that may please their Majesties.»

The intendant made no reply.

«Do you remember,» continued Irma, «how, when we were at the lake, we spoke of the fact that man possessed the advantage of being able to change his dress, and thus to alter his appearance? While yet a child, masquerading was my greatest delight. The soul wings its flight in callow infancy. A *bal costumé* is indeed one of the noblest fruits of culture. The love of coquetry which is innate with all of us displays itself there undisguised.»

The intendant took his leave. While walking away, his mind was filled with his old thoughts about Irma.

« No, » said he to himself, « such a woman would be a constant strain, and would require one to be brilliant and intellectual all day long. She would exhaust one, » said he, almost aloud.

No one knew what character Irma intended to appear in, although many supposed that it would be as « Victory, » since it was well known that she had stood for the model of the statue that surmounted the arsenal. They were busy conjecturing how she could assume that character without violating the social proprieties.

Irma spent much of her time in the atelier, and worked assiduously. She was unable to escape a feeling of unrest, far greater than that she had experienced years ago when looking forward to her first ball. She could not reconcile herself to the idea of preparing for the *fête* so long beforehand, and would like to have had it take place in the very next hour, so that something else might be taken up at once. The long delay tried her patience. She almost envied those beings to whom the preparation for pleasure affords the greatest part of the enjoyment. Work alone calmed her unrest. She had something to do, and this prevented the thoughts of the festival from engaging her mind during the day. It was only in the evening that she would recompense herself for the day's work, by giving full swing to her fancy.

The statue of Victory was still in the atelier and was almost finished. High ladders were placed beside it. The artist was still chiseling at the figure, and would now and then hurry down to observe the general effect, and then hastily mount the ladder again in order to add a touch here or there. Irma scarcely ventured to look up at this effigy of herself in Grecian costume — transformed and yet herself. The idea of being thus translated into the purest of art's forms filled her with a tremor, half joy, half fear.

It was on a winter afternoon. Irma was working assiduously at a copy of a bust of Theseus, for it was growing dark. Near her stood her preceptor's marble bust of Doctor Gunther. All was silent; not a sound was heard save now and then the picking or scratching of the chisel.

At that moment the master descended the ladder, and drawing a deep breath, said: —

«There—that will do. One can never finish. I shall not put another stroke to it. I am afraid that retouching would only injure it. It is done.»

In the master's words and manner, struggling effort and calm content seemed mingled. He laid the chisel aside. Irma looked at him earnestly and said:—

«You are a happy man; but I can imagine that you are still unsatisfied. I don't believe that even Raphael or Michael Angelo was ever satisfied with the work he had completed. The remnant of dissatisfaction which an artist feels at the completion of a work is the germ of a new creation.»

The master nodded his approval of her words. His eyes expressed his thanks. He went to the water-tap and washed his hands. Then he placed himself near Irma and looked at her, while telling her that in every work an artist parts with a portion of his life; that the figure will never again inspire the same feelings that it did while in the workshop. Viewed from afar, and serving as an ornament, no regard would be had to the care bestowed upon details. But the artist's great satisfaction in his work is in having pleased himself; and yet no one can accurately determine how, or to what extent, a conscientious working up of details will influence the general effect.

While the master was speaking, the King was announced. Irma hurriedly spread a damp cloth over her clay model.

The King entered. He was unattended, and begged Irma not to allow herself to be disturbed in her work. Without looking up, she went on with her modeling. The King was earnest in his praise of the master's work.

«The grandeur that dwells in this figure will show posterity what our days have beheld. I am proud of such contemporaries.»

Irma felt that the words applied to her as well. Her heart throbbed. The plaster which stood before her suddenly seemed to gaze at her with a strange expression.

«I should like to compare the finished work with the first models,» said the king to the artist.

«I regret that the experimental models are in my small atelier. Does your Majesty wish me to have them brought here?»

«If you will be good enough to do so.»

The master left. The King and Irma were alone. With rapid steps the King mounted the ladder, and exclaimed in a tremulous voice:—

«I ascend into heaven—I ascend to you. Irma, I kiss you, I kiss your image, and may this kiss forever rest upon those lips, enduring beyond all time. I kiss thee with the kiss of eternity.» He stood aloft and kissed the lips of the statue. Irma could not help looking up, and just at that moment a slanting sunbeam fell on the King and on the face of the marble figure, making it glow as if with life.

Irma felt as if wrapped in a fiery cloud, bearing her away into eternity.

The King descended and placed himself beside her. His breathing was short and quick. She did not dare to look up; she stood as silent and as immovable as a statue. Then the King embraced her—and living lips kissed each other.

Translation of S. A. Stern.

THE NEW HOME AND THE OLD ONE

From ‹On the Heights›

Hansei received various offers for his cottage, and was always provoked when it was spoken of as a «tumble-down old shanty.» He always looked as if he meant to say, «Don't take it ill of me, good old house: the people only abuse you so that they may get you cheap.» Hansei stood his ground. He would not sell his home for a penny less than it was worth; and besides that, he owned the fishing-right, which was also worth something. Grubersepp at last took the house off his hands, with the design of putting a servant of his, who intended to marry in the fall, in possession of the place.

All the villagers were kind and friendly to them,—doubly so since they were about to leave,—and Hansei said:—

«It hurts me to think that I must leave a single enemy behind me. I'd like to make it up with the innkeeper.»

Walpurga agreed with him, and said that she would go along; that she had really been the cause of the trouble, and that if the innkeeper wanted to scold any one, he might as well scold her too.

Hansei did not want his wife to go along, but she insisted upon it.

It was in the last evening in August that they went up into the village. Their hearts beat violently while they drew near to the inn. There was no light in the room. They groped about the porch, but not a soul was to be seen. Dachsel and Wachsel, however, were making a heathenish racket. Hansei called out:

"Is there no one at home?"

"No. There's no one at home," answered a voice from the dark room.

"Well, then tell the host, when he returns, that Hansei and his wife were here, and that they came to ask him to forgive them if they've done him any wrong; and to say that they forgive him too, and wish him luck."

"All right: I'll tell him," said the voice. The door was again slammed to, and Dachsel and Wachsel began barking again.

Hansei and Walpurga returned homeward.

"Do you know who that was?" asked Hansei.

"Why, yes: 'twas the innkeeper himself."

"Well, we've done all we could."

They found it sad to part from all the villagers. They listened to the lovely tones of the bell which they had heard every hour since childhood. Although their hearts were full, they did not say a word about the sadness of parting. Hansei at last broke silence:—"Our new home isn't out of the world: we can often come here."

When they reached the cottage they found that nearly all of the villagers had assembled in order to bid them farewell, but every one added, "I'll see you again in the morning."

Grubersepp also came again. He had been proud enough before; but now he was doubly so, for he had made a man of his neighbor, or at all events had helped to do so. He did not give way to tender sentiment. He condensed all his knowledge of life into a few sentences, which he delivered himself of most bluntly.

"I only want to tell you," said he, "you'll have lots of servants now. Take my word for it, the best of them are good for nothing; but something may be made of them for all that. He who would have his servants mow well, must take the scythe in hand himself. And since you got your riches so quickly, don't forget the proverb: 'Light come, light go.' Keep steady, or it'll go ill with you."

He gave him much more good advice, and Hansei accompanied him all the way back to his house. With a silent pressure of the hand they took leave of each other.

The house seemed empty, for quite a number of chests and boxes had been sent in advance by a boat that was already crossing the lake. On the following morning two teams would be in waiting on the other side.

« So this is the last time that we go to bed in this house,» said the mother. They were all fatigued with work and excitement, and yet none of them cared to go to bed. At last, however, they could not help doing so, although they slept but little.

The next morning they were up and about at an early hour. Having attired themselves in their best clothes, they bundled up the beds and carried them into the boat. The mother kindled the last fire on the hearth. The cows were led out and put into the boat, the chickens were also taken along in a coop, and the dog was constantly running to and fro.

The hour of parting had come.

The mother uttered a prayer, and then called all of them into the kitchen. She scooped up some water from the pail and poured it into the fire, with these words:—« May all that's evil be thus poured out and extinguished, and let those who light a fire after us find nothing but health in their home.»

Hansei, Walpurga, and Gundel were each of them obliged to pour a ladleful of water into the fire, and the grandmother guided the child's hand while it did the same thing.

After they had all silently performed this ceremony, the grandmother prayed aloud:—

« Take from us, O Lord our God, all heartache and homesickness and all trouble, and grant us health and a happy home where we next kindle our fire.»

She was the first to cross the threshold. She had the child in her arms and covered its eyes with her hands while she called out to the others:—

« Don't look back when you go out.»

« Just wait a moment,» said Hansei to Walpurga when he found himself alone with her. « Before we cross this threshold for the last time, I've something to tell you. I must tell it. I mean to be a righteous man and to keep nothing concealed from you. I must tell you this, Walpurga. While you were away and Black Esther lived up yonder, I once came very near being wicked—and unfaithful—thank God, I wasn't. But it torments me to think that I ever wanted to be bad; and now, Walpurga, forgive me and God will forgive me, too. Now I've told you, and have nothing more to tell. If I were to appear before God this moment, I'd know of nothing more."

Walpurga embraced him, and sobbing, said, "You're my dear good husband!" and they crossed the threshold for the last time.

When they reached the garden, Hansei paused, looked up at the cherry-tree, and said:—

"And so you remain here. Won't you come with us? We've always been good friends, and spent many an hour together. But wait! I'll take you with me, after all," cried he, joyfully, "and I'll plant you in my new home."

He carefully dug out a shoot that was sprouting up from one of the roots of the tree. He stuck it in his hat-band, and went to join his wife at the boat.

From the landing-place on the bank were heard the merry sounds of fiddles, clarinets, and trumpets.

Hansei hastened to the landing-place. The whole village had congregated there, and with it the full band of music. Tailor Schneck's son, he who had been one of the cuirassiers at the christening of the crown prince, had arranged and was now conducting the parting ceremonies. Schneck, who was scraping his bass-viol, was the first to see Hansei, and called out in the midst of the music:—

"Long live farmer Hansei and the one he loves best! Hip, hip, hurrah!"

The early dawn resounded with their cheers. There was a flourish of trumpets, and the salutes fired from several small mortars were echoed back from the mountains. The large boat in which their household furniture, the two cows, and the fowls were placed, was adorned with wreaths of fir and oak. Walpurga was standing in the middle of the boat, and with both hands held the child aloft, so that it might see the great crowd of friends and the lake sparkling in the rosy dawn.

"My master's best respects," said one of Grubersepp's servants, leading a snow-white colt by the halter: "he sends you this to remember him by."

Grubersepp was not present. He disliked noise and crowds. He was of a solitary and self-contained temperament. Nevertheless he sent a present which was not only of intrinsic value, but was also a most flattering souvenir; for a colt is usually given by a rich farmer to a younger brother when about to depart. In the eyes of all the world—that is to say, the whole village—Hansei appeared as the younger brother of Grubersepp.

Little Burgei shouted for joy when she saw them leading the snow-white foal into the boat. Gruberwaldl, who was but six years old, stood by the whinnying colt, stroking it and speaking kindly to it.

«Would you like to go to the farm with me and be my servant?» asked Hansei of Gruberwaldl.

«Yes, indeed, if you'll take me.»

«See what a boy he is,» said Hansei to his wife. «What a boy!»

Walpurga made no answer, but busied herself with the child.

Hansei shook hands with every one at parting. His hand trembled, but he did not forget to give a couple of crown thalers to the musicians.

At last he got into the boat and exclaimed:—

«Kind friends! I thank you all. Don't forget us, and we shan't forget you. Farewell! may God protect you all.»

Walpurga and her mother were in tears.

«And now, in God's name, let us start!» The chains were loosened; the boat put off. Music, shouting, singing, and the firing of cannon resounded while the boat quietly moved away from the shore. The sun burst forth in all his glory.

The mother sat there, with her hands clasped. All were silent. The only sound heard was the neighing of the foal.

Walpurga was the first to break the silence. «O dear Lord! if people would only show each other half as much love during life as they do when one dies or moves away.»

The grandmother, who was in the middle of a prayer, shook her head. She quickly finished her prayer and said:—

«That's more than one has the right to ask. It won't do to go about all day long with your heart in your hand. But remember, I've always told you that the people are good enough at heart, even if there are a few bad ones among them.»

Hansei bestowed an admiring glance upon his wife, who had so many different thoughts about almost everything. He supposed it was caused by her having been away from home. But his heart was full, too, although in a different way.

«I can hardly realize,» said Hansei, taking a long breath and putting the pipe, which he had intended to light, back into his pocket, «what has become of all the years that I spent there and all that I went through during the time. Look, Walpurga! the road you see there leads to my home. I know every hill and every hollow. My mother's buried there. Do you see the pines growing on the hill over yonder? That hill was quite bare; every tree was cut down when the French were here; and see how fine and hardy the trees are now. I planted most of them myself. I was a little boy about eleven or twelve years old when the forester hired me. He had fresh soil brought for the whole place and covered the rocky spots with moss. In the spring I worked from six in the morning till seven in the evening, putting in the little plants. My left hand was almost frozen, for I had to keep putting it into a tub of wet loam, with which I covered the roots. I was scantily clothed into the bargain, and had nothing to eat all day long but a piece of bread. In the morning it was cold enough to freeze the marrow in one's bones, and at noon I was almost roasted by the hot sun beating on the rocks. It was a hard life. Yes, I had a hard time of it when I was young. Thank God, it hasn't harmed me any. But I shan't forget it; and let's be right industrious and give all we can to the poor. I never would have believed that I'd live to call a single tree or a handful of earth my own; and now that God has given me so much, let's try and deserve it all."

Hansei's eyes blinked, as if there was something in them, and he pulled his hat down over his forehead. Now, while he was pulling himself up by the roots as it were, he could not help thinking of how thoroughly he had become engrafted into the neighborhood by the work of his hands and by habit. He had felled many a tree, but he knew full well how hard it was to remove the stumps.

The foal grew restive. Gruberwaldl, who had come with them in order to hold it, was not strong enough, and one of the boatmen was obliged to go to his assistance.

"Stay with the foal," said Hansei. "I'll take the oar."

"And I too," cried Walpurga. "Who knows when I'll have another chance? Ah! how often I've rowed on the lake with you and my blessed father."

Hansei and Walpurga sat side by side plying their oars in perfect time. It did them both good to have some employment which would enable them to work off the excitement.

"I shall miss the water," said Walpurga; "without the lake, life'll seem so dull and dry. I felt that, while I was in the city."

Hansei did not answer.

"At the summer palace there's a pond with swans swimming about in it," said she, but still received no answer. She looked around, and a feeling of anger arose within her. When she said anything at the palace, it was always listened to.

In a sorrowful tone she added, «It would have been better if we'd moved in the spring; it would have been much easier to get used to things.»

«Maybe it would,» replied Hansei, at last, «but I've got to hew wood in the winter. Walpurga, let's make life pleasant to each other, and not sad. I shall have enough on my shoulders, and can't have you and your palace thoughts besides.»

Walpurga quickly answered, «I'll throw this ring, which the Queen gave me, into the lake, to prove that I've stopped thinking of the palace.»

«There's no need of that. The ring's worth a nice sum, and besides that it's an honorable keepsake. You must do just as I do.»

«Yes; only remain strong and true.»

The grandmother suddenly stood up before them. Her features were illumined with a strange expression, and she said:—

«Children! Hold fast to the good fortune that you have. You've gone through fire and water together; for it was fire when you were surrounded by joy and love and every one greeted you with kindness—and you passed through the water, when the wickedness of others stung you to the soul. At that time the water was up to your neck, and yet you weren't drowned. Now you've got over it all. And when my last hour comes, don't weep for me; for through you I've enjoyed all the happiness a mother's heart can have in this world.»

She knelt down, scooped up some water with her hand, and sprinkled it over Hansei's and also over Walpurga's face.

They rowed on in silence. The grandmother laid her head on a roll of bedding and closed her eyes. Her face wore a strange expression. After a while she opened her eyes again, and casting a glance full of happiness on her children, she said:

«Sing and be merry. Sing the song that father and I so often sang together; that one verse, the good one.»

Hansei and Walpurga plied the oars while they sang:—

«Ah, blissful is the tender tie
  That binds me, love, to thee;
And swiftly speed the hours by,
  When thou art near to me.»

They repeated the verse again, although at times the joyous shouting of the child and the neighing of the foal bade fair to interrupt it.

. . . .

As they drew near the house, they could hear the neighing of the white foal.

« That's a good beginning,» cried Hansei.

The grandmother placed the child on the ground, and got her hymn-book out of the chest. Pressing the book against her breast with both hands, she went into the house, being the first to enter. Hansei, who was standing near the stable, took a piece of chalk from his pocket and wrote the letters C. M. B., and the date, on the stable door. Then he too went into the house,— his wife, Irma, and the child following him.

Before going into the sitting-room the grandmother knocked thrice at the door. When she had entered she placed the open hymn-book upon the open window-sill, so that the sun might read in it. There were no tables or chairs in the room.

Hansei shook hands with his wife and said, « God be with you, freeholder's wife.»

From that moment Walpurga was known as the «freeholder's wife,» and was never called by any other name.

And now they showed Irma her room. The view extended over meadow and brook and the neighboring forest. She examined the room. There was naught but a green Dutch oven and bare walls, and she had brought nothing with her. In her paternal mansion, and at the castle, there were chairs and tables, horses and carriages; but here— None of these follow the dead.

Irma knelt by the window and gazed out over meadow and forest, where the sun was now shining.

How was it yesterday—was it only yesterday when you saw the sun go down?

Her thoughts were confused and indistinct. She pressed her hand to her forehead; the white handkerchief was still there. A bird looked up to her from the meadow, and when her glance rested upon it it flew away into the woods.

« The bird has its nest,» said she to herself, «and I—»

Suddenly she drew herself up. Hansei had walked out to the grass plot in front of Irma's window, removed the slip of the cherry-tree from his hat, and planted it in the ground.

The grandmother stood by and said, « I trust that you'll be alive and hearty long enough to climb this tree and gather cherries from it, and that your children and grandchildren may do the same.»

There was much to do and to set to rights in the house, and on such occasions it usually happens that those who are dearest to one another are as much in each other's way as closets and tables which have not yet been placed where they belong. The best proof of the amiability of these folks was that they assisted each other cheerfully, and indeed with jest and song.

Walpurga moved her best furniture into Irma's room. Hansei did not interpose a word. « Aren't you too lonely here ?» asked Walpurga, after she had arranged everything as well as possible in so short a time.

«Not at all. There is no place in all the world lonely enough for me. You've so much to do now; don't worry about me. I must now arrange things within myself. I see how good you and yours are; fate has directed me kindly.»

«Oh, don't talk in that way. If you hadn't given me the money, how could we have bought the farm? This is really your own.»

«Don't speak of that,» said Irma, with a sudden start. «Never mention that money to me again.»

Walpurga promised, and merely added that Irma needn't be alarmed at the old man who lived in the room above hers, and who at times would talk to himself and make a loud noise. He was old and blind. The children teased and worried him, but he wasn't bad and would harm no one. Walpurga offered at all events to leave Gundel with Irma for the first night; but Irma preferred to be alone.

«You'll stay with us, won't you?» said Walpurga hesitatingly. «You won't have such bad thoughts again?»

«No, never. But don't talk now: my voice pains me, and so does yours too. Good-night! leave me alone.»

Irma sat by the window and gazed out into the dark night. Was it only a day since she had passed through such terrors? Suddenly she sprang from her seat with a shudder. She had seen Black Esther's head rising out of the darkness, had again heard her dying shriek, had beheld the distorted face and the wild black tresses.— Her hair stood on end. Her thoughts carried her to the bottom of the lake, where she now lay dead.

She opened the window and inhaled the soft, balmy air. She sat by the open casement for a long while, and suddenly heard some one laughing in the room above her.

"Ha! ha! I won't do you the favor! I won't die! I won't die! Pooh, pooh! I'll live till I'm a hundred years old, and then I'll get a new lease of life."

It was the old pensioner. After a while he continued:—

"I'm not so stupid; I know that it's night now, and the freeholder and his wife are come. I'll give them lots of trouble. I'm Jochem. Jochem's my name, and what the people don't like, I do for spite. Ha! ha! I don't use any light, and they must make me an allowance for that. I'll insist on it, if I have to go to the King himself about it."

Irma started when she heard the King mentioned.

"Yes, I'll go to the King, to the King! to the King!" cried the old man overhead, as if he knew that the word tortured Irma.

She heard him close the window and move a chair. The old man went to bed.

Irma looked out into the dark night. Not a star was to be seen. There was no light anywhere; nothing was heard but the roaring of the mountain stream and the rustling of the trees. The night seemed like a dark abyss.

"Are you still awake?" asked a soft voice without. It was the grandmother.

"I was once a servant at this farm," said she. "That was forty years ago; and now I'm the mother of the freeholder's wife, and almost the head one on the farm. But I keep thinking of you all the time. I keep trying to think how it is in your heart. I've something to tell you. Come out again. I'll take you where it'll do you good to be. Come!"

Irma went out into the dark night with the old woman. How different this guide from the one she had had the day before!

The old woman led her to the fountain. She had brought a cup with her and gave it to Irma. "Come, drink; good cold water's the best. Water comforts the body; it cools and quiets us; it's like bathing one's soul. I know what sorrow is too. One's insides burn as if they were afire."

Irma drank some of the water of the mountain spring. It seemed like a healing dew, whose influence was diffused through her whole frame.

The grandmother led her back to her room and said, «You've still got the shirt on that you wore at the palace. You'll never stop thinking of that place till you've burned that shirt.»

The old woman would listen to no denial, and Irma was as docile as a little child. The grandmother hurried to get a coarse shirt for her, and after Irma had put it on, brought wood and a light and burnt the other at the open fire. Irma was also obliged to cut off her long nails and throw them into the fire. Then Beate disappeared for a few moments, and returned with Irma's riding-habit. «You must have been shot; for there are balls in this,» said she, spreading out the long blue habit.

A smile passed over Irma's face, as she felt the balls that had been sewed into the lower part of the habit, so that it might hang more gracefully. Beate had also brought something very useful,—a deerskin. «Hansei sends you this,» said she. «He thinks that maybe you're used to having something soft for your feet to rest on. He shot the deer himself.»

Irma appreciated the kindness of the man who could show such affection to one who was both a stranger and a mystery to him.

The grandmother remained at Irma's bedside until she fell asleep. Then she breathed thrice on the sleeper and left the room.

It was late at night when Irma awoke.

«To the King! to the King! to the King!» The words had been uttered thrice in a loud voice. Was it hers, or that of the man overhead? Irma pressed her hand to her forehead and felt the bandage. Was it sea-grass that had gathered there? Was she lying alive at the bottom of the lake? Gradually all that had happened became clear to her.

Alone, in the dark and silent night, she wept. And these were the first tears she had shed since the terrible events through which she had passed.

It was evening when Irma awoke. She put her hand to her forehead. A wet cloth had been bound round it. She had been sleeping nearly twenty-four hours. The grandmother was sitting by her bed.

«You've a strong constitution,» said the old woman, «and that helped you. It's all right now.»

Irma arose. She felt strong, and guided by the grandmother, walked over to the dwelling-house.

« God be praised that you're well again,» said Walpurga, who was standing there with her husband; and Hansei added, «yes, that's right.»

Irma thanked them, and looked up at the gable of the house. What words there met her eye?

« Don't you think the house has a good motto written on its forehead?» asked Hansei.

Irma started. On the gable of the house she read the following inscription:—

EAT AND DRINK: FORGET NOT GOD: THINE HONOR GUARD:
OF ALL THY STORE,
THOU'LT CARRY HENCE
A WINDING-SHEET
AND NOTHING MORE.

Translation of S. A. Stern.

THE COURT PHYSICIAN'S PHILOSOPHY

From ‹On the Heights›

GUNTHER continued, «I am only a physician, who has held many a hand hot with fever or stiff in death in his own. The healing art might serve as an illustration. We help all who need our help, and do not stop to ask who they are, whence they come, or whether when restored to health they persist in their evil courses. Our actions are incomplete, fragmentary; thought alone is complete and all-embracing. Our deeds and ourselves are but fragments—the whole is God.»

«I think I grasp your meaning [replied the Queen]. But our life, as you say, is indeed a mere fraction of life as a whole; and how is each one to bear up under the portion of suffering that falls to his individual lot? Can one—I mean it in its best sense—always be outside of one's self?»

«I am well aware, your Majesty, that passions and emotions cannot be regulated by ideas; for they grow in a different soil, or, to express myself correctly, move in entirely different spheres. It is but a few days since I closed the eyes of my old friend Eberhard. Even he never fully succeeded in subordinating his temperament to his philosophy; but in his dying hour he rose beyond the terrible grief that broke his heart—grief for his child. He summoned the thoughts of better hours to his aid,—hours when his perception of the truth had been undimmed by sorrow or passion,—and he died a noble, peaceful death. Your Majesty must still live and labor, elevating yourself and others, at one and the same time. Permit me to remind you of the moment when, seated under the weeping ash, your heart was filled with pity for the poor child that from the time it enters into the world is doubly helpless. Do you still remember how you refused to rob it of its mother? I appeal to the pure and genuine impulse of that moment. You were noble and forgiving then, because you had not yet suffered. You cast no stone at the fallen; you loved, and therefore you forgave.»

«O God!» cried the Queen, «and what has happened to me? The woman on whose bosom my child rested is the most abandoned of creatures. I loved her just as if she belonged to another world — a world of innocence. And now I am satisfied that she was the go-between, and that her naïveté was a mere mask concealing an unparalleled hypocrite. I imagined that truth and purity still dwelt in the simple rustic world — but everything is perverted and corrupt. The world of simplicity is base; aye, far worse than that of corruption!»

«I am not arguing about individuals. I think you mistaken in regard to Walpurga; but admitting that you are right, of this at least we can be sure: morality does not depend upon so-called education or ignorance, belief or unbelief. The heart and mind which have regained purity and steadfastness alone possess true knowledge. Extend your view beyond details and take in the whole — that alone can comfort and reconcile you.»

«I see where you are, but I cannot get up there. I can't always be looking through your telescope that shows naught but blue sky. I am too weak. I know what you mean; you say in effect, 'Rise above these few people, above this span of space known as a kingdom: compared with the universe, they are but as so many blades of grass or a mere clod of earth.'»

Gunther nodded a pleased assent: but the Queen, in a sad voice, added:—

«Yes, but this space and these people constitute my world. Is purity merely imaginary? If it be not about us, where can it be found?»

«Within ourselves,» replied Gunther. «If it dwell within us, it is everywhere; if not, it is nowhere. He who asks for more has not yet passed the threshold. His heart is not yet what it should be. True love for the things of this earth, and for God, the final cause of all, does not ask for love in return. We love the divine spark that dwells in creatures themselves unconscious of it: creatures who are wretched, debased, and as the church has it, unredeemed. My Master taught me that the purest joys arise from this love of God or of eternally pure nature. I made this truth my own, and you can and ought to do likewise. This park is yours; but the birds that dwell in it, the air, the light, its beauty, are not yours alone, but are shared with you by all. So long as the world is ours, in the vulgar sense of the word, we may love it; but when we have made it our own, in a purer and better sense, no one can take it from us. The great thing is to be strong and to know that hatred is death, that love alone is life, and that the amount of love that we possess is the measure of the life and the divinity that dwells within us."

Gunther rose and was about to withdraw. He feared lest excessive thought might over-agitate the Queen, who, however, motioned him to remain. He sat down again.

"You cannot imagine—" said the Queen after a long pause, "—but that is one of the cant phrases that we have learned by heart. I mean just the reverse of what I have said. You can imagine the change that your words have effected in me."

"I can conceive it."

"Let me ask a few more questions. I believe—nay, I am sure—that on the height you occupy, and toward which you would fain lead me, there dwells eternal peace. But it seems so cold and lonely up there. I am oppressed with a sense of fear, just as if I were in a balloon ascending into a rarer atmosphere, while more and more ballast was ever being thrown out. I don't know how to make my meaning clear to you. I don't understand how to keep up affectionate relations with those about me, and yet regard them from a distance, as it were,—looking upon their deeds as the mere action and reaction of natural forces. It seems to me as if, at that height, every sound and every image must vanish into thin air."

"Certainly, your Majesty. There is a realm of thought in which hearing and sight do not exist, where there is pure thought and nothing more."

"But are not the thoughts that there abound projected from the realm of death into that of life, and is that any better than monastic self-mortification?"

«It is just the contrary. They praise death, or at all events extol it, because after it life is to begin. I am not one of those who deny a future life. I only say, in the words of my Master, ‘Our knowledge is of life and not of death,’ and where my knowledge ceases my thoughts must cease. Our labors, our love, are all of this life. And because God is in this world and in all that exist in it, and only in those things, have we to liberate the divine essence wherever it exists. The law of love should rule. What the law of nature is in regard to matter, the moral law is to man.»

«I cannot reconcile myself to your dividing the divine power into millions of parts. When a stone is crushed, every fragment still remains a stone; but when a flower is torn to pieces, the parts are no longer flowers.»

«Let us take your simile as an illustration, although in truth no example is adequate. The world, the firmament, the creatures that live on the face of the earth, are not divided — they are one; thought regards them as a whole. Take for instance the flower. The idea of divinity which it suggests to us, and the fragrance which ascends from it, are yet part and parcel of the flower; attributes without which it is impossible for us to conceive of its existence. The works of all poets, all thinkers, all heroes, may be likened to streams of fragrance wafted through time and space. It is in the flower that they live forever. Although the eternal spirit dwells in the cell of every tree or flower and in every human heart, it is undivided and in its unity fills the world. He whose thoughts dwell in the infinite regards the world as the mighty corolla from which the thought of God exhales.»

Translation of S. A. Stern.

IN COUNTESS IRMA'S DIARY

From ‘On the Heights’

YESTERDAY was a year since I lay at the foot of the rock. I could not write a word. My brain whirled with the thoughts of that day; but now it is over.

* * *

I don't think I shall write much more. I have now experienced all the seasons in my new world. The circle is complete.

There is nothing new to come from without. I know all that exists about me, or that can happen. I am at home in my new world.

* * *

Unto Jesus the Scribes and Pharisees brought a woman who was to be stoned to death, and He said unto them, «Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.»

Thus it is written.

But I ask: How did she continue to live — she who was saved from being stoned to death; she who was pardoned — that is, condemned to live? How did she live on? Did she return to her home? How did she stand with the world? And how with her own heart?

No answer. None.

I must find the answer in my own experience

* * *

«Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.» These are the noblest, the greatest words ever uttered by human lips, or heard by human ear. They divide the history of the human race into two parts. They are the «Let there be light» of the second creation. They divide and heal my little life too, and create me anew.

Has one who is not wholly without sin a right to offer precepts and reflections to others?

Look into your own heart. What are you?

Behold my hands. They are hardened by toil. I have done more than merely lift them in prayer.

* * *

Since I am alone I have not seen a letter of print. I have no book and wish for none; and this is not in order to mortify myself, but because I wish to be perfectly alone.

* * *

She who renounces the world, and in her loneliness still cherishes the thought of eternity, has assumed a heavy burden.

Convent life is not without its advantages. The different voices that join in the *chorale* sustain each other; and when the tone at last ceases, it seems to float away on the air and vanish by degrees. But here I am quite alone. I am priest and church, organ and congregation, confessor and penitent, all in one; and my heart is often *so* heavy, as if I must needs have another to help me bear the load. "Take me up and carry me, I cannot go further!" cries my soul. But then I rouse myself again, seize my scrip and my pilgrim's staff and wander on, solitary and alone; and while I wander, strength returns to me.

. . . .

It often seems to me as if it were sinful thus to bury myself alive. My voice is no longer heard in song, and much more that dwells within me has become mute.

Is this right?

If my only object in life were to be at peace with myself, it would be well enough; but I long to labor and to do something for others. Yet where and what shall it be?

* * *

When I first heard that the beautifully carved furniture of the great and wealthy is the work of prisoners, it made me shudder. And now, although I am not deprived of freedom, I am in much the same condition. Those who have disfigured life should, as an act of expiation, help to make life more beautiful for others. The thought that I am doing this comforts and sustains me.

* * *

My work prospers. But last winter's wood is not yet fit for use. My little pitchman has brought me some that is old, excellent, and well seasoned, having been part of the rafters of an old house that has just been torn down. We work together cheerfully, and our earnings are considerable.

* * *

Vice is the same everywhere, except that here it is more open. Among the masses, vice is characterized by coarseness; among the upper classes, by meanness.

The latter shake off the consequences of their evil deeds, while the former are obliged to bear them.

* * *

The rude manners of these people are necessary, and are far preferable to polite deceit. They must needs be rough and rude. If it were not for its coarse, thick bark, the oak could not withstand the storm.

I have found that this rough bark covers more tenderness and sincerity than does the smoothest surface.

* * *

Jochem told me, to-day, that he is still quite a good walker, but that a blind man finds it very troublesome to go anywhere; for at every step he is obliged to grope about, so that he may feel sure of his ground before he firmly plants his foot on the earth.

Is it not the same with me? Am I not obliged to be sure of the ground before I take a step?

Such is the way of the fallen.

Ah! why does everything I see or hear become a symbol of my life?

. . . .

I have now been here between two and three years. I have formed a resolve which it will be difficult to carry out. I shall go out into the world once more. I must again behold the scenes of my past life. I have tested myself severely.

May it not be a love of adventure, that genteel yet vulgar desire to undertake what is unusual or fraught with peril? Or is it a morbid desire to wander through the world after having died, as it were?

No; far from it. What can it be? An intense longing to roam again, if it be only for a few days. I must kill the desire, lest it kill me.

Whence arises this sudden longing?

Every tool that I use while at work burns my hand.

I must go.

I shall obey the impulse, without worrying myself with speculations as to its cause. I am subject to the rules of no order. My will is my only law. I harm no one by obeying it. I feel myself free; the world has no power over me.

I dreaded informing Walpurga of my intention. When I did so, her tone, her words, her whole manner, and the fact that she for the first time called me «child,» made it seem as if her mother were still speaking to me.

«Child,» said she, «you're right! Go! It'll do you good. I believe that you'll come back and will stay with us; but if you don't, and another life opens up to you—your expiation has been a bitter one, far heavier than your sin.»

Uncle Peter was quite happy when he learned that we were to be gone from one Sunday to the Sunday following. When I asked him whether he was curious as to where we were going, he replied:—

«It's all one to me. I'd travel over the whole world with you, wherever you'd care to go; and if you were to drive me away, I'd follow you like a dog and find you again.»

I shall take my journal with me, and will note down every day.

* * *

[By the lake.]—I find it difficult to write a word.

The threshold I am obliged to cross, in order to go out into the world, is my own gravestone.

I am equal to it.

How pleasant it was to descend toward the valley. Uncle Peter sang; and melodies suggested themselves to me, but I did not sing. Suddenly he interrupted himself and said:—

«In the inns you'll be my niece, won't you?»

«Yes.»

«But you must call me ‹uncle› when we're there?»

«Of course, dear uncle.»

He kept nodding to himself for the rest of the way, and was quite happy.

We reached the inn at the landing. He drank, and I drank too, from the same glass.

«Where are you going?» asked the hostess.

«To the capital,» said he, although I had not said a word to him about it. Then he said to me in a whisper:—

«If you intend to go elsewhere, the people needn't know everything.»

I let him have his own way.

I looked for the place where I had wandered at that time. There—there was the rock—and on it a cross, bearing in golden characters the inscription:—

HERE PERISHED

IRMA, COUNTESS VON WILDENORT,

IN THE TWENTY-FIRST YEAR
OF HER LIFE.

Traveler, pray for her and honor her memory.

. . . .

I never rightly knew why I was always dissatisfied, and yearning for the next hour, the next day, the next year, hoping that it would bring me that which I could not find in the present. It was not love, for love does not satisfy. I desired to live in the passing moment, but could not. It always seemed as if something were waiting for me without the door, and calling me. What could it have been?

I know now; it was a desire to be at one with myself, to understand myself. Myself in the world, and the world in me.

* * *

The vain man is the loneliest of human beings. He is constantly longing to be seen, understood, acknowledged, admired, and loved.

I could say much on the subject, for I too was once vain. It was only in actual solitude that I conquered the loneliness of vanity. It is enough for me that I exist.

How far removed this is from all that is mere show.

* * *

Now I understand my father's last act. He did not mean to punish me. His only desire was to arouse me; to lead me to self-consciousness; to the knowledge which, teaching us to become different from what we are, saves us.

* * *

I understand the inscription in my father's library:—"When I am alone, then am I least alone."

Yes; when alone, one can more perfectly lose himself in the life universal. I have lived and have come to know the truth. I can now die.

* * *

He who is at one with himself, possesses all. . . .

I believe that I know what I have done. I have no compassion for myself. This is my full confession.

I have sinned—not against nature, but against the world's rules. Is that sin? Look at the tall pines in yonder forest. The higher the tree grows, the more do the lower branches die away; and thus the tree in the thick forest is protected and sheltered by its fellows, but can nevertheless not perfect itself in all directions.

I desired to lead a full and complete life and yet to be in the forest, to be in the world and yet in society. But he who means to live thus, must remain in solitude. As soon as we become members of society, we cease to be mere creatures of nature. Nature and morality have equal rights, and must form a compact with each other; and where there are two powers with equal rights, there must be mutual concessions.

Herein lies my sin.

He who desires to live a life of nature alone, must withdraw himself from the protection of morality. I did not fully desire either the one or the other; hence I was crushed and shattered.

My father's last action was right. He avenged the moral law, which is just as human as the law of nature. The animal world knows neither father nor mother, so soon as the young is able to take care of itself. The human world does know them and must hold them sacred.

I see it all quite clearly. My sufferings and my expiation are deserved. I was a thief! I stole the highest treasures of all: confidence, love, honor, respect, splendor.

How noble and exalted the tender souls appear to themselves when a poor rogue is sent to jail for having committed a theft! But what are all possessions which can be carried away, when compared with those that are intangible!

Those who are summoned to the bar of justice are not always the basest of mankind.

I acknowledge my sin, and my repentance is sincere.

My fatal sin, the sin for which I now atone, was that I dissembled, that I denied and extenuated that which I represented to myself as a natural right. Against the Queen I have sinned worst of all. To me she represents that moral order which I violated and yet wished to enjoy.

To you, O Queen, to you — lovely, good, and deeply injured one — do I confess all this!

If I die before you, — and I hope that I may, — these pages are to be given to you.

. . . .

I can now accurately tell the season of the year, and often the hour of the day, by the way in which the first sunbeams fall into my room and on my work-bench in the morning. My chisel hangs before me on the wall, and is my index.

* * *

The drizzling spring showers now fall on the trees; and thus it is with me. It seems as if there were a new delight in store for me. What can it be? I shall patiently wait!

* * *

A strange feeling comes over me, as if I were lifted up from the chair on which I am sitting, and were flying, I know not whither! What is it? I feel as if dwelling in eternity.

Everything seems flying toward me: the sunlight and the sunshine, the rustling of the forests and the forest breezes, beings of all ages and of all kinds—all seem beautiful and rendered transparent by the sun's glow.

I am!

I am in God!

If I could only die now and be wafted through this joy to dissolution and redemption!

But I will live on until my hour comes.

Come, thou dark hour, whenever thou wilt! To me thou art light!

I feel that there is light within me. O Eternal Spirit of the universe, I am one with thee!

I was dead, and I live—I shall die and yet live.

Everything has been forgiven and blotted out.—There was dust on my wings.—I soar aloft into the sun and into infinite space. I shall die singing from the fullness of my soul. Shall I sing!

Enough.

* * *

I know that I shall again be gloomy and depressed and drag along a weary existence; but I have once soared into infinity and have felt a ray of eternity within me. That I shall never lose again. I should like to go to a convent, to some quiet, cloistered cell, where I might know nothing of the world, and could live on within myself until death shall call me. But it is not to be. I am destined to live on in freedom and to labor; to live with my fellow-beings and to work for them.

The results of my handiwork and of my powers of imagination belong to you; but what I am within myself is mine alone.

* * *

I have taken leave of everything here; of my quiet room, of my summer bench; for I know not whether I shall ever return.

And if I do, who knows but what everything may have become strange to me?

* * *

(Last page written in pencil.) — It is my wish that when I am dead, I may be wrapped in a simple linen cloth, placed in a rough unplaned coffin, and buried under the apple-tree, on the road that leads to my paternal mansion. I desire that my brother and other relatives may be apprised of my death at once, and that they shall not disturb my grave by the wayside.

No stone, no name, is to mark my grave.

ÉMILE AUGIER

(1820-1889)

As an observer of society, a satirist, and a painter of types and characters of modern life, Émile Augier ranks among the greatest French dramatists of this century. Critics consider him in the line of direct descent from Molière and Beaumarchais. His collected works ('Théâtre Complet') number twenty-seven plays, of which nine are in verse. Eight of these were written with a literary partner. Three are now called classics: 'Le Gendre de M. Poirier' (M. Poirier's Son-in-Law), 'L'Aventurière' (The Adventuress), and 'Fils de Giboyer' (Giboyer's Boy). 'Le Gendre de M. Poirier' was written with Jules Sandeau, but the admirers of Augier have proved by internal evidence that his share in its composition was the greater. It is a comedy of manners based on the old antagonism between vulgar ignorant energy and ability on the one side; and lazy empty birth and breeding on the other; embodied in Poirier, a wealthy shopkeeper, and M. de Presles, his son-in-law, an impoverished nobleman.

ÉMILE AUGIER

Guillaume Victor Émile Augier was born in Valence, France, September 17th, 1820, and was intended for the law; but inheriting literary tastes from his grandfather, Pigault Lebrun the romance writer, he devoted himself to letters. When his first play, 'La Ciguë' (The Hemlock), — in the preface to which he defended his grandfather's memory, — was presented at the Odéon in 1844, it made the author famous. Théophile Gautier describes it at length in Vol. iii. of his ‘Art Dramatique,’ and compares it to Shakespeare's ‘Timon of Athens.’ It is a classic play, and the hero closes his career by a draught of hemlock.

Augier's works are:—‘Un Homme de Bien’ (A Good Man); ‘L'Aventurière’ (The Adventuress); ‘Gabrielle’; ‘Le Joueur de Flute’ (The Flute Player); ‘Diane’ (Diana), a romantic play on the same theme as Victor Hugo's ‘Marion Delorme,’ written for and played by Rachel; ‘La Pierre de Touche’ (The Touchstone), with Jules Sandeau; ‘Philberte,’ a comedy of the last century; ‘Le Mariage d'Olympe’ (Olympia's Marriage); ‘Le Gendre de M. Poirier’ (M. Poirier's Son-in-Law); ‘Ceinture Dorée’ (The Golden Belt), with Edouard Foussier; ‘La Jeunesse’ (Youth); ‘Les Lionnes Pauvres’ (Ambition and Poverty),—a bold story of social life in Paris during the Second Empire, also with Foussier; ‘Les Effrontés’ (Brass), an attack on the worship of money; ‘Le Fils de Giboyer’ (Giboyer's Boy), the story of a father's devotion, ambitions, and self-sacrifice; ‘Maître Guérin’ (Guérin the Notary), the hero being an inventor; ‘La Contagion’ (Contagion), the theme of which is skepticism; ‘Paul Forestier,’ the story of a young artist; ‘Le Post-Scriptum’ (The Postscript); ‘Lions et Renards’ (Lions and Foxes), whose motive is love of power; ‘Jean Thommeray,’ the hero of which is drawn from Sandeau's novel of the same title; ‘Madame Caverlet,’ hinging on the divorce question; ‘Les Fourchambault’ (The Fourchambaults), a plea for family union; ‘La Chasse au Roman’ (Pursuit of a Romance), and ‘L'Habit Vert’ (The Green Coat), with Sandeau and Alfred de Musset; and the libretto for Gounod's opera ‘Sappho.’ Augier wrote one volume of verse, which he modestly called ‘Pariétaire,’ the name of a common little vine, the English danewort. In 1858 he was elected to the French Academy, and in 1868 became a Commander of the Legion of Honor. He died at Croissy, October 25th, 1889. An analysis of his dramas by Émile Montégut is published in the Revue de Deux Mondes for April, 1878.

A CONVERSATION WITH A PURPOSE

From ‘Giboyer's Boy’

MARQUIS—Well, dear Baroness, what has an old bachelor like me done to deserve so charming a visit?

Baroness—That's what I wonder myself, Marquis. Now I see you I don't know why I've come, and I've a great mind to go straight back.

Marquis—Sit down, vexatious one!

Baroness—No. So you close your door for a week; your servants all look tragic; your friends put on mourning in anticipation; I, disconsolate, come to inquire—and behold, I find you at table!

Marquis—I'm an old flirt, and wouldn't show myself for an empire when I'm in a bad temper. You wouldn't recognize your agreeable friend when he has the gout;—that's why I hide.

Baroness—I shall rush off to reassure your friend.

Marquis—They are not so anxious as all that. Tell me something of them.

Baroness—But somebody's waiting in my carriage.

Marquis—I'll send to ask him up.

Baroness—But I'm not sure that you know him.

Marquis—His name?

Baroness—I met him by chance.

Marquis—And you brought him by chance. [*He rings.*] You are a mother to me. [*To Dubois.*] You will find an ecclesiastic in Madame's carriage. Tell him I'm much obliged for his kind alacrity, but I think I won't die this morning.

Baroness—O Marquis! what would our friends say if they heard you?

Marquis—Bah! I'm the black sheep of the party, its spoiled child; that's taken for granted. Dubois, you may say also that Madame begs the Abbé to drive home, and to send her carriage back for her.

Baroness—Allow me—

Marquis—Go along, Dubois.—Now you are my prisoner.

Baroness—But, Marquis, this is very unconventional.

Marquis [*kissing her hand*]—Flatterer! Now sit down, and let's talk about serious things. [*Taking a newspaper from the table.*] The gout hasn't kept me from reading the news. Do you know that poor Déodat's death is a serious mishap?

Baroness—What a loss to our cause!

Marquis—I have wept for him.

Baroness—Such talent! Such spirit! Such sarcasm!

Marquis—He was the hussar of orthodoxy. He will live in history as the angelic pamphleteer. And now that we have settled his noble ghost—

Baroness—You speak very lightly about it, Marquis.

Marquis—I tell you I've wept for him.—Now let's think of some one to replace him.

Baroness—Say to succeed him. Heaven doesn't create two such men at the same time.

Marquis—What if I tell you that I have found such another? Yes, Baroness, I've unearthed a wicked, cynical, virulent pen, that spits and splashes; a fellow who would lard his own father with epigrams for a consideration, and who would eat him with salt for five francs more.

Baroness—Déodat had sincere convictions.

Marquis—That's because he fought for them. There are no more mercenaries. The blows they get convince them. I'll give this fellow a week to belong to us body and soul.

Baroness—If you haven't any other proofs of his faithfulness—

Marquis—But I have.

Baroness—Where from?

Marquis—Never mind. I have it.

Baroness—And why do you wait before presenting him?

Marquis—For him in the first place, and then for his consent. He lives in Lyons, and I expect him to-day or to-morrow. As soon as he is presentable, I'll introduce him.

Baroness—Meanwhile, I'll tell the committee of your find.

Marquis—I beg you, no. With regard to the committee, dear Baroness, I wish you'd use your influence in a matter which touches me.

Baroness—I have not much influence—

Marquis—Is that modesty, or the exordium of a refusal?

Baroness—If either, it's modesty.

Marquis—Very well, my charming friend. Don't you know that these gentlemen owe you too much to refuse you anything?

Baroness—Because they meet in my parlor?

Marquis—That, yes; but the true, great, inestimable service you render every day is to possess such superb eyes.

Baroness—It's well for you to pay attention to such things!

Marquis—Well for me, but better for these Solons whose compliments don't exceed a certain romantic intensity.

Baroness—You are dreaming.

Marquis—What I say is true. That's why serious societies always rally in the parlor of a woman, sometimes clever, sometimes beautiful. You are both, Madame: judge then of your power!

Baroness—You are too complimentary: your cause must be detestable.

Marquis—If it was good I could win it for myself.

Baroness—Come, tell me, tell me.

Marquis—Well, then: we must choose an orator to the Chamber for our Campaign against the University. I want them to choose —

Baroness—Monsieur Maréchal?

Marquis—You are right.

Baroness—Do you really think so, Marquis? Monsieur Maréchal?

Marquis—Yes, I know. But we don't need a bolt of eloquence, since we'll furnish the address. Maréchal reads well enough, I assure you.

Baroness—We made him deputy on your recommendation. That was a good deal.

Marquis—Maréchal is an excellent recruit.

Baroness—So you say.

Marquis—How disgusted you are! An old subscriber to the Constitutionnel, a liberal, a Voltairean, who comes over to the enemy bag and baggage. What would you have? Monsieur Maréchal is not a man, my dear: it's the stout *bourgeoisie* itself coming over to us. I love this honest *bourgeoisie*, which hates the revolution, since there is no more to be gotten out of it; which wants to stem the tide which brought it, and make over a little feudal France to its own profit. Let it draw our chestnuts from the fire if it wants to. This pleasant sight makes me enjoy politics. Long live Monsieur Maréchal and his likes, *bourgeois* of the right divine. Let us heap these precious allies with honor and glory until our triumph ships them off to their mills again.

Baroness—Several of our deputies are birds of the same feather. Why choose the least capable for orator?

Marquis—It's not a question of capacity.

Baroness—You're a warm patron of Monsieur Maréchal!

Marquis—I regard him as a kind of family protégé. His grandfather was farmer to mine. I'm his daughter's guardian. These are bonds.

Baroness—You don't tell everything.

Marquis—All that I know.

Baroness—Then let me complete your information. They say that in old times you fell in love with the first Madame Maréchal.

Marquis—I hope you don't believe this silly story?

Baroness—Faith, you do so much to please Monsieur Maréchal—

Marquis—That it seems as if I must have injured him? Good heavens! Who is safe from malice? Nobody. Not even you, dear Baroness.

Baroness—I'd like to know what they can say of me.

Marquis—Foolish things that I certainly won't repeat.

Baroness—Then you believe them?

Marquis—God forbid! That your dead husband married his mother's companion? It made me so angry!

Baroness—Too much honor for such wretched gossip.

Marquis—I answered strongly enough, I can tell you.

Baroness—I don't doubt it.

Marquis—But you are right in wanting to marry again.

Baroness—Who says I want to?

Marquis—Ah! you don't treat me as a friend. I deserve your confidence all the more for understanding you as if you had given it. The aid of a sorcerer is not to be despised, Baroness.

Baroness [*sitting down by the table*]—Prove your sorcery.

Marquis [*sitting down opposite*]—Willingly! Give me your hand.

Baroness [*removing her glove*]—You'll give it back again.

Marquis—And help you dispose of it, which is more. [*Examining her hand.*] You are beautiful, rich, and a widow.

Baroness—I could believe myself at Mademoiselle Lenormand's!

Marquis—While it is so easy, not to say tempting, for you to lead a brilliant, frivolous life, you have chosen a rôle almost austere with its irreproachable morals.

Baroness—If it was a rôle, you'll admit that it was much like a penitence.

Marquis—Not for you.

Baroness—What do you know about it?

Marquis—I read it in your hand. I even see that the contrary would cost you more, for nature has gifted your heart with unalterable calmness.

Baroness [*drawing away her hand*]—Say at once that I'm a monster.

Marquis—Time enough! The credulous think you a saint; the skeptics say you desire power; I, Guy François Condorier, Marquis d'Auberive, think you a clever little German, trying to build a throne for yourself in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. You have conquered the men, but the women resist you: your reputation offends them; and for want of a better weapon they use this miserable rumor I've just repeated. In short, your flag's inadequate and you're looking for a larger one. Henry IV. said that Paris was worth a mass. You think so too.

Baroness—They say sleep-walkers shouldn't be contradicted. However, do let me say that if I really wanted a husband—with my money and my social position, I might already have found twenty.

Marquis—Twenty, yes; but not one. You forget this little devil of a rumor.

Baroness [*rising*]—Only fools believe that.

Marquis [*rising*]—There's the *hic*. It's only very clever men, too clever, who court you, and you want a fool.

Baroness—Why?

Marquis—Because you don't want a master. You want a husband whom you can keep in your parlor, like a family portrait, nothing more.

Baroness—Have you finished, dear diviner? What you have just said lacks common-sense, but you are amusing, and I can refuse you nothing.

Marquis—Maréchal shall have the oration?

Baroness—Or I'll lose my name.

Marquis—And you *shall* lose your name—I promise you.

A SEVERE YOUNG JUDGE

From ‹The Adventuress›

CLORINDE [*softly*]—Here's Célie. Look at her clear eyes. I love her, innocent child!

Annibal—Yes, yes, yes! [*He sits down in a corner.*]

Clorinde [*approaching Célie, who has paused in the doorway*]—My child, you would not avoid me to-day if you knew how happy you make me!

Célie—My father has ordered me to come to you.

Clorinde—Ordered you? Did you need an order? Are we really on such terms? Tell me, do you think I do not love you, that you should look upon me as your enemy? Dear, if you could read my heart you would find there the tenderest attachment.

Célie—I do not know whether you are sincere, Madame. I hope that you are not, for it distresses one to be loved by those—

Clorinde—Whom one does not love? They must have painted me black indeed, that you are so reluctant to believe in my friendship.

Célie—They have told me—what I have heard, thanks to you, Madame, was not fit for my young ears. This interview is cruel— Please let me—

Clorinde—No, no! Stay, Mademoiselle. For this interview, painful to us both, nevertheless concerns us both.

Célie—I am not your judge, Madame.

Clorinde—Nevertheless you do judge me, and severely! Yes, my life has been blameworthy; I confess it. But you know nothing of its temptations. How should you know, sweet soul, to whom life is happy and goodness easy? Child, you have your family to guard you. You have happiness to keep watch and ward for you. How should you know what poverty whispers to young ears on cold evenings! You, who have never been hungry, how should you understand the price that is asked for a mouthful of bread?

Célie—I don't know the pleadings of poverty, but one need not listen to them. There are many poor girls who go hungry and cold and keep from harm.

Clorinde—Child, their courage is sublime. Honor them if you will, but pity the cowards.

Célie—Yes, for choosing infamy rather than work, hunger, or death! Yes, for losing the respect of all honest souls! Yes, I can pity them for not being worthier of pity.

Clorinde—So that's your Christian charity! So nothing in the world—bitter repentance or agonies of suffering, or vows of sanctity for all time to come—may obliterate the past?

Célie—You force me to speak without knowledge. But—since I must give judgment—who really hates a fault will hate the fruit of it. If you keep this place, Madame, you will not expect me to believe in the genuineness of your renunciations.

Clorinde—I do not dishonor it. There is no reason why I should leave it. I have already proved my sincerity by high-minded and generous acts. I bear myself as my place demands. My conscience is at rest.

Célie—Your good action—for I believe you—is only the beginning of expiation. Virtue seems to me like a holy temple. You may leave it by a door with a single step, but to enter again you must climb up a hundred on your knees, beating your breast.

Clorinde—How rigid you all are, and how your parents train their first-born never to open the ranks! Oh, fortunate race! impenetrable phalanx of respectability, who make it impossible for the sinner to reform! You keep the way of repentance so rough that the foot of poor humanity cannot tread it. God will demand from you the lost souls whom your hardness has driven back to sin.

Célie—God, do you say? When good people forgive they betray his justice. For punishment is not retribution only, but the acknowledgment and recompense of those fighting ones that brave hunger and cold in a garret, Madame, yet do not surrender.

Clorinde—Go, child! I cannot bear more—

Célie—I have said more than I meant to say. Good-by. This is the first and last time that I shall ever speak of this.

[*She goes.*]

A CONTENTED IDLER

From ‹M. Poirier's Son-in-Law›

[*The party are leaving the dining-room.*]

GASTON—Well, Hector! What do you think of it? The house is just as you see it now, every day in the year. Do you believe there is a happier man in the world than I?

Duke—Faith! I envy you; you reconcile me to marriage.

Antoinette [*in a low voice to Verdelet*]—Monsieur de Montmeyran is a charming young man!

Verdelet [*in a low voice*]—He pleases me.

Gaston [*to Poirier, who comes in last*]—Monsieur Poirier, I must tell you once for all how much I esteem you. Don't think I'm ungrateful.

Poirier—Oh! Monsieur!

Gaston—Why the devil don't you call me Gaston? And you, too, dear Monsieur Verdelet, I'm very glad to see you.

Antoinette—He is one of the family, Gaston.

Gaston—Shake hands then, Uncle.

Verdelet [*aside, giving him his hand*]—He's not a bad fellow.

Gaston—Agree, Hector, that I've been lucky. Monsieur Poirier, I feel guilty. You make my life one long fête and never give me a chance in return. Try to think of something I can do for you.

Poirier—Very well, if that's the way you feel, give me a quarter of an hour. I should like to have a serious talk with you.

Duke—I'll withdraw.

Poirier—No, stay, Monsieur. We are going to hold a kind of family council. Neither you nor Verdelet will be in the way.

Gaston—The deuce, my dear father-in-law. A family council! You embarrass me!

Poirier—Not at all, dear Gaston. Let us sit down.

[*They seat themselves around the fireplace.*]

Gaston—Begin, Monsieur Poirier.

Poirier—You say you are happy, dear Gaston, and that is my greatest recompense.

Gaston—I'm willing to double your gratification.

Poirier—But now that three months have been given to the joys of the honeymoon, I think that there has been romance enough, and that it's time to think about history.

Gaston—You talk like a book. Certainly, we'll think about history if you wish. I'm willing.

Poirier—What do you intend to do?

Gaston—To-day?

Poirier—And to-morrow, and in the future. You must have some idea.

Gaston—True, my plans are made. I expect to do to-day what I did yesterday, and to-morrow what I shall do to-day. I'm not versatile, in spite of my light air; and if the future is only like the present I'll be satisfied.

Poirier—But you are too sensible to think that the honeymoon can last forever.

Gaston—Too sensible, and too good an astronomer. But you've probably read Heine?

Poirier—You must have read that, Verdelet?

Verdelet—Yes; I've read him.

Poirier — Perhaps he spent his life at playing truant.

Gaston — Well, Heine, when he was asked what became of the old full moons, said that they were broken up to make the stars.

Poirier — I don't understand.

Gaston — When our honeymoon is old, we'll break it up and there'll be enough to make a whole Milky Way.

Poirier — That is a clever idea, of course.

Gaston — Its only merit is simplicity.

Poirier — But seriously, don't you think that the idle life you lead may jeopardize the happiness of a young household?

Gaston — Not at all.

Verdelet — A man of your capacity can't mean to idle all his life.

Gaston — With resignation.

Antoinette — Don't you think you'll find it dull after a time, Gaston?

Gaston — You calumniate yourself, my dear.

Antoinette — I'm not vain enough to suppose that I can fill your whole existence, and I admit that I'd like to see you follow the example of Monsieur de Montmeyran.

Gaston [*rising and leaning against the mantelpiece*] — Perhaps you want me to fight?

Antoinette — No, of course not.

Gaston — What then?

Poirier — We want you to take a position worthy of your name.

Gaston — There are only three positions which my name permits me: soldier, bishop, or husbandman. Choose.

Poirier — We owe everything to France. France is our mother.

Verdelet — I understand the vexation of a son whose mother remarries; I understand why he doesn't go to the wedding: but if he has the right kind of heart he won't turn sulky. If the second husband makes her happy, he'll soon offer him a friendly hand.

Poirier — The nobility cannot always hold itself aloof, as it begins to perceive. More than one illustrious name has set the example: Monsieur de Valcherrière, Monsieur de Chazerolles, Monsieur de Mont Louis —

Gaston — These men have done as they thought best. I don't judge them, but I cannot imitate them.

Antoinette — Why not, Gaston?

Gaston — Ask Montmeyran.

Verdelet — The Duke's uniform answers for him.

Duke — Excuse me, a soldier has but one opinion — his duty; but one adversary — the enemy.

Poirier — However, Monsieur —

Gaston — Enough, it isn't a matter of politics, Monsieur Poirier. One may discuss opinions, but not sentiments. I am bound by gratitude. My fidelity is that of a servant and of a friend. Not another word. [*To the Duke.*] I beg your pardon, my dear fellow. This is the first time we've talked politics here, and I promise you it shall be the last.

The Duke [*in a low voice to Antoinette*] — You've been forced into making a mistake, Madame.

Antoinette — I know it, now that it's too late.

Verdelet [*softly, to Poirier*] — Now you're in a fine fix.

Poirier [*in same tone*] — He's repulsed the first assault, but I don't raise the siege.

Gaston — I'm not resentful, Monsieur Poirier. Perhaps I spoke a little too strongly, but this is a tender point with me, and unintentionally you wounded me. Shake hands.

Poirier — You are very kind.

A Servant — There are some people in the little parlor who say they have an appointment with Monsieur Poirier.

Poirier — Very well, ask them to wait a moment. [*The servant goes out.*] Your creditors, son-in-law.

Gaston — Yours, my dear father-in-law. I've turned them over to you.

Duke — As a wedding present.

THE FEELINGS OF AN ARTIST

From ‹M. Poirier's Son-in-Law›

POIRIER [*alone*] — How vexatious he is, that son-in-law of mine! and there's no way to get rid of him. He'll die a nobleman, for he will do nothing and he is good for nothing. —— There's no end to the money he costs me. —— He is master of my house. —— I'll put a stop to it. [*He rings. Enter a servant.*] Send up the porter and the cook. We shall see my son-in-law! I have set up my back. I've unsheathed my velvet paws. You will make no concessions, eh, my fine gentleman? Take your comfort! I will not yield either: you may remain marquis, and I will again become a *bourgeois*. At least I'll have the pleasure of living to my fancy.

The Porter — Monsieur has sent for me?

Poirier — Yes, François, Monsieur has sent for you. You can put the sign on the door at once.

The Porter — The sign?

Poirier — « To let immediately, a magnificent apartment on the first floor, with stables and carriage houses.»

The Porter — The apartment of Monsieur le Marquis?

Poirier — You have said it, François.

The Porter — But Monsieur le Marquis has not given the order.

Poirier — Who is the master here, donkey? Who owns this mansion?

The Porter — You, Monsieur.

Poirier — Then do what I tell you without arguing.

The Porter — Yes, Monsieur. [*Enter Vatel.*]

Poirier — Go, François. [*Exit Porter.*] Come in, Monsieur Vatel: you are getting up a big dinner for to-morrow?

Vatel — Yes, Monsieur, and I venture to say that the menu would not be disowned by my illustrious ancestor himself. It is really a work of art, and Monsieur Poirier will be astonished.

Poirier — Have you the menu with you?

Vatel — No, Monsieur, it is being copied; but I know it by heart.

Poirier — Then recite it to me.

Vatel — Le potage aux ravioles à l'Italienne et le potage à l'orge à la Marie Stuart.

Poirier — You will replace these unknown concoctions by a good meat soup, with some vegetables on a plate.

Vatel — What, Monsieur?

Poirier — I mean it. Go on.

Vatel — Relevé. La carpe du Rhin à la Lithuanienne, les poulardes à la Godard — le filet de bœuf braisé aux raisins à la Napolitaine, le jambon de Westphalie, rotie madère.

Poirier — Here is a simpler and far more sensible fish course: brill with caper sauce — then Bayonne ham with spinach, and a savory stew of bird, with well-browned rabbit.

Vatel — But, Monsieur Poirier — I will never consent.

Poirier — I am master — do you hear? Go on.

Vatel—Entrées. Les filets de volaille à la concordat—les croustades de truffe garniés de foies à la royale, le faison étoffe à la Montpensier, les perdreaux rouges farcis à la bohemienne.

Poirier—In place of these side dishes we will have nothing at all, and we will go at once to the roast,—that is the only essential.

Vatel—That is against the precepts of art.

Poirier—I'll take the blame of that: let us have your roasts.

Vatel—It is not worth while, Monsieur: my ancestor would have run his sword through his body for a less affront. I offer my resignation.

Poirier—And I was about to ask for it, my good friend; but as one has eight days to replace a servant—

Vatel—A servant, Monsieur? I am an artist!

Poirier—I will fill your place by a woman. But in the mean time, as you still have eight days in my service, I wish you to prepare my menu.

Vatel—I will blow my brains out before I dishonor my name.

Poirier [*aside*]—Another fellow who adores his name! [*Aloud.*] You may burn your brains, Monsieur Vatel, but don't burn your sauces.—Well, *bon jour!* [*Exit Vatel.*] And now to write invitations to my old cronies of the Rue des Bourdonnais. Monsieur le Marquis de Presles, I'll soon take the starch out of you.

[*He goes out whistling the first couplet of* '*Monsieur and Madame Denis.*']

A CONTEST OF WILLS

From 'The Fourchambaults'

MADAME FOURCHAMBAULT—Why do you follow me?

Fourchambault—I'm not following you: I'm accompanying you.

Madame Fourchambault—I despise you; let me alone. Oh! my poor mother little thought what a life of privation would be mine when she gave me to you with a dowry of eight hundred thousand francs!

Fourchambault—A life of privation—because I refuse you a yacht!

Madame Fourchambault — I thought my dowry permitted me to indulge a few whims, but it seems I was wrong.

Fourchambault — A whim costing eight thousand francs!

Madame Fourchambault — Would you have to pay for it?

Fourchambault — That's the kind of reasoning that's ruining me.

Madame Fourchambault — Now he says I'm ruining him! His whole fortune comes from me.

Fourchambault — Now don't get angry, my dear. I want you to have everything in reason, but you must understand the situation.

Madame Fourchambault — The situation?

Fourchambault — I ought to be a rich man; but thanks to the continual expenses you incur in the name of your dowry, I can barely rub along from day to day. If there should be a sudden fall in stocks, I have no reserve with which to meet it.

Madame Fourchambault — That can't be true! Tell me at once that it isn't true, for if it were so you would be without excuse.

Fourchambault — I or you?

Madame Fourchambault — This is too much! Is it my fault that you don't understand business? If you haven't had the wit to make the best use of your way of living and your family connections — any one else —

Fourchambault — Quite likely! But I am petty enough to be a scrupulous man, and to wish to remain one.

Madame Fourchambault — Pooh! That's the excuse of all the dolts who can't succeed. They set up to be the only honest fellows in business. In my opinion, Monsieur, a timid and mediocre man should not insist upon remaining at the head of a bank, but should turn the position over to his son.

Fourchambault — You are still harping on that? But, my dear, you might as well bury me alive! Already I'm a mere cipher in my family.

Madame Fourchambault — You do not choose your time well to pose as a victim, when like a tyrant you are refusing me a mere trifle.

Fourchambault — I refuse you nothing. I merely explain my position. Now do as you like. It is useless to expostulate.

Madame Fourchambault — At last! But you have wounded me to the heart, Adrien, and just when I had a surprise for you —

Fourchambault—What is your surprise? [*Aside:* It makes me tremble.]

Madame Fourchambault—Thanks to me, the Fourchambaults are going to triumph over the Duhamels.

Fourchambault—How?

Madame Fourchambault—Madame Duhamel has been determined this long time to marry her daughter to the son of the prefect.

Fourchambault—I knew it. What about it?

Madame Fourchambault—While she was making a goose of herself so publicly, I was quietly negotiating, and Baron Rastiboulois is coming to ask our daughter's hand.

Fourchambault—That will never do! I'm planning quite a different match for her.

Madame Fourchambault—You? I should like to know—

Fourchambault—He's a fine fellow of our own set, who loves Blanche, and whom she loves if I'm not mistaken.

Madame Fourchambault—You are entirely mistaken. You mean Victor Chauvet, Monsieur Bernard's clerk?

Fourchambault—His right arm, rather. His *alter ego.*

Madame Fourchambault—Blanche did think of him at one time. But her fancy was just a morning mist, which I easily dispelled. She has forgotten all about him, and I advise you to follow her example.

Fourchambault—What fault can you find with this young man?

Madame Fourchambault—Nothing and everything. Even his name is absurd. I never would have consented to be called Madame Chauvet, and Blanche is as proud as I was. But that is only a detail; the truth is, I won't have her marry a clerk.

Fourchambault—You won't have! You won't have! But there are two of us.

Madame Fourchambault—Are you going to portion Blanche?

Fourchambault—I? No.

Madame Fourchambault—Then you see there are not two of us. As I am going to portion her, it is my privilege to choose my son-in-law.

Fourchambault—And mine to refuse him. I tell you I won't have your little baron at any price.

Madame Fourchambault—Now it is your turn. What fault can you find with him, except his title?

Fourchambault—He's fast, a gambler, worn out by dissipation.

Madame Fourchambault—Blanche likes him just as he is.

Fourchambault—Heavens! He's not even handsome.

Madame Fourchambault—What does that matter? Haven't I been the happiest of wives?

Fourchambault—What? One word is as good as a hundred. I won't have him. Blanche need not take Chauvet, but she shan't marry Rastiboulois either. That's all I have to say.

Madame Fourchambault—But, Monsieur—

Fourchambault—That's all I have to say.

[*He goes out.*]

ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

(354-430)

BY SAMUEL HART

St. Augustine of Hippo (Aurelius Augustinus) was born at Tagaste in Numidia, November 13th, 354. The story of his life has been told by himself in that wonderful book addressed to God which he called the ‘Confessions.’ He gained but little from his father Patricius; he owed almost everything to his loving and saintly mother Monica. Though she was a Christian, she did not venture to bring her son to baptism; and he went away from home with only the echo of the name of Jesus Christ in his soul, as it had been spoken by his mother's lips. He fell deeply into the sins of youth, but found no satisfaction in them, nor was he satisfied by the studies of literature to which for a while he devoted himself. The reading of Cicero's ‘Hortensius’ partly called him back to himself; but before he was twenty years old he was carried away into Manichæism, a strange system of belief which united traces of Christian teaching with Persian doctrines of two antagonistic principles, practically two gods, a good god of the spiritual world and an evil god of the material world. From this he passed after a while into less gross forms of philosophical speculation, and presently began to lecture on rhetoric at Tagaste and at Carthage. When nearly thirty years of age he went to Rome, only to be disappointed in his hopes for glory as a rhetorician; and after two years his mother joined him at Milan.

The great Ambrose had been called from the magistrate's chair to be bishop of this important city; and his character and ability made a great impression on Augustine. But Augustine was kept from acknowledging and submitting to the truth, not by the intellectual difficulties which he propounded as an excuse, but by his unwillingness to submit to the moral demands which Christianity made upon him. At last there came one great struggle, described in a passage from the 'Confessions' which is given below; and Monica's hopes and prayers were answered in the conversion of her son to the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ. On Easter Day, 387, in the thirty-third year of his life, he was baptized, an unsubstantiated tradition assigning to this occasion the composition and first use of the *Te Deum*. His mother died at Ostia as they were setting out for Africa; and he returned to his native land, with the hope that he might there live a life of retirement and of simple Christian obedience. But this might not be: on the occasion of Augustine's visit to Hippo in 391, the bishop of that city persuaded him to receive ordination to the priesthood and to remain with him as an adviser; and four years later he was consecrated as colleague or coadjutor in the episcopate. Thus he entered on a busy public life of thirty-five years, which called for the exercise of all his powers as a Christian, a metaphysician, a man of letters, a theologian, an ecclesiastic, and an administrator.

Into the details of that life it is impossible to enter here; it must suffice to indicate some of the ways in which as a writer he gained and still holds a high place in Western Christendom, having had an influence which can be paralleled, from among uninspired men, only by that of Aristotle. He maintained the unity of the Church, and its true breadth, against the Donatists; he argued, as he so well could argue, against the irreligion of the Manichæans; when the great Pelagian heresy arose, he defended the truth of the doctrine of divine grace as no one could have done who had not learned by experience its power in the regeneration and conversion of his own soul; he brought out from the treasures of Holy Scripture ample lessons of truth and duty, in simple exposition and exhortation; and in full treatises he stated and enforced the great doctrines of Christianity.

Augustine was not alone or chiefly the stern theologian whom men picture to themselves when they are told that he was the Calvin of those early days, or when they read from his voluminous and often illogical writings quotations which have a hard sound. If he taught a stern doctrine of predestinarianism, he taught also the great power of sacramental grace; if he dwelt at times on the awfulness of the divine justice, he spoke also from the depths of his experience of the power of the divine love; and his influence on the ages has been rather that of the ‹Confessions›—taking their key-note from the words of the first chapter, «Thou, O Lord, hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is unquiet until it find rest in Thee»—than that of the writings which have earned for their author the foremost place among the Doctors of the Western Church. But his greatest work, without any doubt, is the treatise on the ‹City of God.› The Roman empire, as Augustine's life passed on, was hastening to its end. Moral and political declension had doubtless been arrested by the good influence which had been brought to bear upon it; but it was impossible to avert its fall. «Men's hearts,» as well among the heathen as among the Christians, were «failing them for fear and for looking after those things that were coming on the earth.» And Christianity was called to meet the argument drawn from the fact that the visible declension seemed to date from the time when the new religion was introduced into the Roman world, and that the most rapid decline had been from the time when it had been accepted as the religion of the State. It fell to the Bishop of Hippo to write in reply one of the greatest works ever written by a Christian. Eloquence and learning, argument and irony, appeals to history and earnest entreaties, are united to move enemies to acknowledge the truth and to strengthen the faithful in maintaining it. The writer sets over against each other the city of the world and the city of God, and in varied ways draws the contrast between them; and while mourning over the ruin that is coming upon the great city that had become a world-empire, he tells of the holy beauty and enduring strength of «the city that hath the foundations.»

Apart from the interest attaching to the great subjects handled by St. Augustine in his many works, and from the literary attractions of writings which unite high moral earnestness and the use of a cultivated rhetorical style, his works formed a model for Latin theologians as long as that language continued to be habitually used by Western scholars; and to-day both the spirit and the style of the great man have a wide influence on the devotional and the controversial style of writers on sacred subjects.

He died at Hippo, August 28th, 430.

Samuel Hart

The selections are from the ‹Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,› by permission of the Christian Literature Company

THE GODLY SORROW THAT WORKETH REPENTANCE

From the ‹Confessions›

SUCH was the story of Pontitianus: but thou, O Lord, while he was speaking, didst turn me round towards myself, taking me from behind my back, when I had placed myself, unwilling to observe myself; and setting me before my face, that I might see how foul I was, how crooked and defiled, bespotted and ulcerous. And I beheld and stood aghast; and whither to flee from myself I found not. And if I sought to turn mine eye from off myself, he went on with his relation, and thou didst again set me over against myself, and thrusted me before my eyes, that I might find out mine iniquity and hate it. I had known it, but made as though I saw it not, winked at it, and forgot it.

But now, the more ardently I loved those whose healthful affections I heard of, that they had resigned themselves wholly to thee to be cured, the more did I abhor myself when compared with them. For many of my years (some twelve) had now run out with me since my nineteenth, when, upon the reading of Cicero's ‹Hortensius,› I was stirred to an earnest love of wisdom; and still I was deferring to reject mere earthly felicity and to give myself to search out that, whereof not the finding only, but the very search, was to be preferred to the treasures and kingdoms of the world, though already found, and to the pleasures of the body, though spread around me at my will. But I, wretched, most wretched, in the very beginning of my early youth, had begged chastity of thee, and said, «Give me chastity and continency, only not yet.» For I feared lest thou shouldest hear me soon, and soon cure me of the disease of concupiscence, which I wished to have satisfied, rather than extinguished. And I had wandered through crooked ways in a sacrilegious superstition, not indeed assured thereof, but as preferring it to the others which I did not seek religiously, but opposed maliciously.

But when a deep consideration had, from the secret bottom of my soul, drawn together and heaped up all my misery in the sight of my heart, there arose a mighty storm, bringing a mighty shower of tears. And that I might pour it forth wholly in its natural expressions, I rose from Alypius: solitude was suggested to me as fitter for the business of weeping: and I retired so far that even his presence could not be a burden to me. Thus was it then with me, and he perceived something of it; for something I suppose he had spoken, wherein the tones of my voice appeared choked with weeping, and so had risen up. He then remained where we were sitting, most extremely astonished. I cast myself down I know not how, under a fig-tree, giving full vent to my tears; and the floods of mine eyes gushed out, an acceptable sacrifice to thee. And, not indeed in these words, yet to this purpose, spake I much unto thee:—"And thou, O Lord, how long? how long, Lord, wilt thou be angry—forever? Remember not our former iniquities," for I felt that I was held by them. I sent up these sorrowful words: "How long? how long? To-morrow and to-morrow? Why not now? why is there not this hour an end to my uncleanness?"

CONSOLATION

From the 'Confessions'

So was I speaking, and weeping, in the most bitter contrition of my heart, when lo! I heard from a neighboring house a voice, as of boy or girl (I could not tell which), chanting and oft repeating, "Take up and read; take up and read." Instantly my countenance altered, and I began to think most intently whether any were wont in any kind of play to sing such words, nor could I remember ever to have heard the like. So, checking the torrent of my tears, I arose; interpreting it to be no other than a command from God, to open the book and read the first chapter I should find. Eagerly then I returned to the place where Alypius was sitting; for there had I laid the volume of the Epistles when I arose thence. I seized, opened, and in silence read that section on which my eyes first fell:—"Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." No further would I read; nor heeded I, for instantly at the end of this sentence, by a light, as it were, of serenity infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away.

Then putting my finger between (or some other mark), I shut the volume, and with a calmed countenance, made it known to Alypius. And what was wrought in him, which I know not, he thus shewed me. He asked to see what I had read; I shewed him, and he looked even farther than I had read, and I knew not what followed. This followed: «Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye»; which he applied to himself and disclosed to me. And by this admonition was he strengthened; and by a good resolution and purpose, and most corresponding to his character, wherein he did always far differ from me for the better, without any turbulent delay he joined me. Thence we go to my mother: we tell her; she rejoiceth: we relate in order how it took place; she leapeth for joy, and triumpheth and blesseth thee, «who art able to do above all that we ask or think»: for she perceived that thou hadst given her more for me than she was wont to beg by her pitiful and most sorrowful groanings.

THE FOES OF THE CITY

From ‹The City of God›

LET these and similar answers (if any fuller and fitter answers can be found) be given to their enemies by the redeemed family of the Lord Christ, and by the pilgrim city of the King Christ. But let this city bear in mind that among her enemies lie hid those who are destined to be fellow-citizens, that she may not think it a fruitless labor to bear what they inflict as enemies, till they become confessors of the faith. So also, as long as she is a stranger in the world, the city of God has in her communion, and bound to her by the sacraments, some who shall not eternally dwell in the lot of the saints. Of these, some are not now recognized; others declare themselves, and do not hesitate to make common cause with our enemies in murmuring against God, whose sacramental badge they wear. These men you may see to-day thronging the churches with us, to-morrow crowding the theatres with the godless. But we have the less reason to despair of the reclamation of even such persons, if among our most declared enemies there are now some, unknown to themselves, who are destined to become our friends. In truth, these two cities are entangled together in this world, and intermingled until the last judgment shall effect their separation. I now proceed to speak, as God shall help me, of the rise and progress and end of these two cities; and what I write, I write for the glory of the city of God, that being placed in comparison with the other, it may shine with a brighter lustre.

THE PRAISE OF GOD

From ‹The City of God›

Wherefore it may very well be, and it is perfectly credible, that we shall in the future world see the material forms of the new heavens and the new earth, in such a way that we shall most distinctly recognize God everywhere present, and governing all things, material as well as spiritual; and shall see Him, not as we now understand the invisible things of God, by the things that are made, and see Him darkly as in a mirror and in part, and rather by faith than by bodily vision of material appearances, but by means of the bodies which we shall wear and which we shall see wherever we turn our eyes. As we do not believe, but see, that the living men around us who are exercising the functions of life are alive, although we cannot see their life without their bodies, but see it most distinctly by means of their bodies, so, wherever we shall look with the spiritual eyes of our future bodies, we shall also, by means of bodily substances, behold God, though a spirit, ruling all things. Either, therefore, the eyes shall possess some quality similar to that of the mind, by which they shall be able to discern spiritual things, and among them God, — a supposition for which it is difficult or even impossible to find any support in Scripture, — or what is more easy to comprehend, God will be so known by us, and so much before us, that we shall see Him by the spirit in ourselves, in one another, in Himself, in the new heavens and the new earth, in every created thing that shall then exist; and that also by the body we shall see Him in every bodily thing which the keen vision of the eye of the spiritual body shall reach. Our thoughts also shall be visible to all, for then shall be fulfilled the words of the Apostle, «Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.» How great shall be that felicity, which shall be tainted with no evil, which shall lack no good, and which shall afford leisure for the praises of God, who shall be all in all! For I know not what other employment there can be where no weariness shall slacken activity, nor any want stimulate to labor. I am admonished also by the sacred song, in which I read or hear the words, «Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be alway praising Thee.»

A PRAYER

From ‹The Trinity›

O Lord our God, directing my purpose by the rule of faith, so far as I have been able, so far as Thou hast made me able, I have sought Thee, and have desired to see with my understanding what I have believed; and I have argued and labored much. O Lord my God, my only hope, hearken to me, lest through weariness I be unwilling to seek Thee, but that I may always ardently seek Thy face. Do Thou give me strength to seek, who hast led me to find Thee, and hast given the hope of finding Thee more and more. My strength and my weakness are in Thy sight; preserve my strength and heal my weakness. My knowledge and my ignorance are in Thy sight; when Thou hast opened to me, receive me as I enter; when Thou hast closed, open to me as I knock. May I remember Thee, understand Thee, love Thee. Increase these things in me, until Thou renew me wholly. But oh, that I might speak only in preaching Thy word and in praising Thee. But many are my thoughts, such as Thou knowest, «thoughts of man, that are vain.» Let them not so prevail in me, that anything in my acts should proceed from them; but at least that my judgment and my conscience be safe from them under Thy protection. When the wise man spake of Thee in his book, which is now called by the special name of Ecclesiasticus, «We speak,» he says, «much, and yet come short; and in sum of words, He is all.» When therefore we shall have come to Thee, these very many things that we speak, and yet come short, shall cease; and Thou, as One, shalt remain «all in all.» And we shall say one thing without end, in praising Thee as One, ourselves also made one in Thee. O Lord, the one God, God the Trinity, whatever I have said in these books that is of Thine, may they acknowledge who are Thine; if I have said anything of my own, may it be pardoned both by Thee and by those who are Thine. Amen.

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MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS

(121–180 A. D.)

BY JAMES FRASER GLUCK

Marcus Aurelius, one of the most illustrious emperors of Rome, and, according to Canon Farrar, «the noblest of pagan emperors,» was born at Rome April 20th, A. D. 121, and died at Vindobona — the modern Vienna — March 17th, A. D. 180, in the twentieth year of his reign and the fifty-ninth year of his age.

His right to an honored place in literature depends upon a small volume written in Greek, and usually called ‹The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.› The work consists of mere memoranda, notes, disconnected reflections and confessions, and also of excerpts from the Emperor's favorite authors. It was evidently a mere private diary or note-book written in great haste, which readily accounts for its repetitions, its occasional obscurity, and its frequently elliptical style of expression. In its pages the Emperor gives his aspirations, and his sorrow for his inability to realize them in his daily life; he expresses his tentative opinions concerning the problems of creation, life, and death; his reflections upon the deceitfulness of riches, pomp, and power, and his conviction of the vanity of all things except the performance of duty. The work contains what has been called by a distinguished scholar «the common creed of wise men, from which all other views may well seem mere deflections on the side of an unwarranted credulity or of an exaggerated despair.» From the pomp and circumstance of state surrounding him, from the manifold cares of his exalted rank, from the tumult of protracted wars, the Emperor retired into the pages of this book as into the sanctuary of his soul, and there found in sane and rational reflection the peace that the world could not give and could never take away. The tone and temper of the work is unique among books of its class. It is sweet yet dignified, courageous yet resigned, philosophical and speculative, yet above all, intensely practical.

Through all the ages from the time when the Emperor Diocletian prescribed a distinct ritual for Aurelius as one of the gods; from the time when the monks of the Middle Ages treasured the ‹Meditations› as carefully as they kept their manuscripts of the Gospels, the work has been recognized as the precious life-blood of a master spirit. An adequate English translation would constitute to-day a most valuable *vade mecum* of devotional feeling and of religious inspiration. It would prove a strong moral tonic to hundreds of minds now sinking into agnosticism or materialism.

The distinguished French writer M. Martha observes that in the ‘Meditations of Marcus Aurelius’ «we find a pure serenity, sweetness, and docility to the commands of God, which before him were unknown, and which Christian grace has alone surpassed. One cannot read the book without thinking of the sadness of Pascal and the gentleness of Fénelon. We must pause before this soul, so lofty and so pure, to contemplate ancient virtue in its softest brilliancy, to see the moral delicacy to which profane doctrines have attained.»

Those in the past who have found solace in its pages have not been limited to any one country, creed, or condition in life. The distinguished Cardinal Francis Barberini the elder occupied his last years in translating the ‘Meditations’ into Italian; so that, as he said, «the thoughts of the pious pagan might quicken the faith of the faithful.» He dedicated the work to his own soul, so that it «might blush deeper than the scarlet of the cardinal robe as it looked upon the nobility of the pagan.» The venerable and learned English scholar Thomas Gataker, of the religious faith of Cromwell and Milton, spent the last years of his life in translating the work into Latin as the noblest preparation for death. The book was the constant companion of Captain John Smith, the discoverer of Virginia, who found in it «sweet refreshment in his seasons of despondency.» Jean Paul Richter speaks of it as a vital help in «the deepest floods of adversity.» The French translator Pierron says that it exalted his soul into a serene region, above all petty cares and rivalries. Montesquieu declares, in speaking of Marcus Aurelius, «He produces such an effect upon our minds that we think better of ourselves, because he inspires us with a better opinion of mankind.» The great German historian Niebuhr says of the Emperor, as revealed in this work, «I know of no other man who combined such unaffected kindness, mildness, and humility with such conscientiousness and severity toward himself.» Renan declares the book to be «a veritable gospel. It will never grow old, for it asserts no dogma. Though science were to destroy God and the soul, the ‘Meditations of Marcus Aurelius’ would remain forever young and immortally true.» The eminent English critic Matthew Arnold was found on the morning after the death of his eldest son engaged in the perusal of his favorite Marcus Aurelius, wherein alone he found comfort and consolation.

The ‘Meditations of Marcus Aurelius’ embrace not only moral reflections; they include, as before remarked, speculations upon the origin and evolution of the universe and of man. They rest upon a philosophy. This philosophy is that of the Stoic school as broadly distinguished from the Epicurean. Stoicism, at all times, inculcated the supreme virtues of moderation and resignation; the subjugation of corporeal desires; the faithful performance of duty; indifference to one's own pain and suffering, and the disregard of material luxuries. With these principles there was, originally, in the Stoic philosophy conjoined a considerable body of logic, cosmogony, and paradox. But in Marcus Aurelius these doctrines no longer stain the pure current of eternal truth which ever flowed through the history of Stoicism. It still speculated about the immortality of the soul and the government of the universe by a supernatural Intelligence, but on these subjects proposed no dogma and offered no final authoritative solution. It did not forbid man to hope for a future life, but it emphasized the duties of the present life. On purely rational grounds it sought to show men that they should always live nobly and heroicly, and how best to do so. It recognized the significance of death, and attempted to teach how men could meet it under any and all circumstances with perfect equanimity.

Marcus Aurelius was descended from an illustrious line which tradition declared extended to the good Numa, the second King of Rome. In the descendant Marcus were certainly to be found, with a great increment of many centuries of noble life, all the virtues of his illustrious ancestor. Doubtless the cruel persecutions of the infamous Emperors who preceded Hadrian account for the fact that the ancestors of Aurelius left the imperial city and found safety in Hispania Bætica, where in a town called Succubo — not far from the present city of Cordova — the Emperor's great-grandfather, Annius Verus, was born. From Spain also came the family of the Emperor Hadrian, who was an intimate friend of Annius Verus. The death of the father of Marcus Aurelius when the lad was of tender years led to his adoption by his grandfather and subsequently by Antoninus Pius. By Antoninus he was subsequently named as joint heir to the Imperial dignity with Commodus, the son of Ælius Cæsar, who had previously been adopted by Hadrian.

From his earliest youth Marcus was distinguished for his sincerity and truthfulness. His was a docile and a serious nature. «Hadrian's bad and sinful habits left him,» says Niebuhr, «when he gazed on the sweetness of that innocent child. Punning on the boy's paternal name of *Verus*, he called him *Verissimus*, ‹the *most* true.›» Among the many statues of Marcus extant is one representing him at the tender age of eight years offering sacrifice. He was even then a priest of Mars. It was the hand of Marcus alone that threw the crown so carefully and skillfully that it invariably alighted upon the head of the statue of the god. The entire ritual he knew by heart. The great Emperor Antoninus Pius lived in the most simple and unostentatious manner; yet even this did not satisfy the exacting, lofty spirit of Marcus. At twelve years of age he began to practice all the austerities of Stoicism. He became a veritable ascetic. He ate most sparingly; slept little, and when he did so it was upon a bed of boards. Only the repeated entreaties of his mother induced him to spread a few skins upon his couch. His health was seriously affected for a time; and it was, perhaps, to this extreme privation that his subsequent feebleness was largely due. His education was of the highest order of excellence. His tutors, like Nero's, were the most distinguished teachers of the age; but unlike Nero, the lad was in every way worthy of his instructors. His letters to his dearly beloved teacher Fronto are still extant, and in a very striking and charming way they illustrate the extreme simplicity of life in the imperial household in the villa of Antoninus Pius at Lorium by the sea. They also indicate the lad's deep devotion to his studies and the sincerity of his love for his relatives and friends.

When his predecessor and adoptive father Antoninus felt the approach of death, he gave to the tribune who asked him for the watchword for the night the reply «Equanimity,» directed that the golden statue of Fortune that always stood in the Emperor's chamber be transferred to that of Marcus Aurelius, and then turned his face and passed away as peacefully as if he had fallen asleep. The watchword of the father became the life-word of the son, who pronounced upon that father in the ‘Meditations’ one of the noblest eulogies ever written. «We should,» says Renan, «have known nothing of Antoninus if Marcus Aurelius had not handed down to us that exquisite portrait of his adopted father, in which he seems, by reason of humility, to have applied himself to paint an image superior to what he himself was. Antoninus resembled a Christ who would not have had an evangel; Marcus Aurelius a Christ who would have written his own.»

It would be impossible here to detail even briefly all the manifold public services rendered by Marcus Aurelius to the Empire during his reign of twenty years. Among his good works were these: the establishment, upon eternal foundation, of the noble fabric of the Civil Law — the prototype and basis of Justinian's task; the founding of schools for the education of poor children; the endowment of hospitals and homes for orphans of both sexes; the creation of trust companies to receive and distribute legacies and endowments; the just government of the provinces; the complete reform of the system of collecting taxes; the abolition of the cruelty of the criminal laws and the mitigation of sentences unnecessarily severe; the regulation of gladiatorial exhibitions; the diminution of the absolute power possessed by fathers over their children and of masters over their slaves; the admission of women to equal rights to succession to property from their children; the rigid suppression of spies and informers; and the adoption of the principle that merit, as distinguished from rank or political friendship, alone justified promotion in the public service.

But the greatest reform was the reform in the Imperial Dignity itself, as exemplified in the life and character of the Emperor. It is this fact which gives to the 'Meditations' their distinctive value. The infinite charm, the tenderness and sweetness of their moral teachings, and their broad humanity, are chiefly noteworthy because the Emperor himself practiced in his daily life the principles of which he speaks, and because tenderness and sweetness, patience and pity, suffused his daily conduct and permeated his actions. The horrible cruelties of the reigns of Nero and Domitian seemed only awful dreams under the benignant rule of Marcus Aurelius.

It is not surprising that the deification of a deceased emperor, usually regarded by Senate and people as a hollow mockery, became a veritable fact upon the death of Marcus Aurelius. He was not regarded in any sense as mortal. All men said he had but returned to his heavenly place among the immortal gods. As his body passed, in the pomp of an imperial funeral, to its last resting-place, the tomb of Hadrian,—the modern Castle of St. Angelo at Rome,—thousands invoked the divine blessing of Antoninus. His memory was sacredly cherished. His portrait was preserved as an inspiration in innumerable homes. His statue was almost universally given an honored place among the household gods. And all this continued during successive generations of men.

Marcus Aurelius has been censured for two acts: the first, the massacre of the Christians which took place during his reign; the second, the selection of his son Commodus as his successor. Of the massacre of the Christians it may be said, that when the conditions surrounding the Emperor are once properly understood, no just cause for condemnation of his course remains. A prejudice against the sect was doubtless acquired by him through the teachings of his dearly beloved instructor and friend Fronto. In the writings of the revered Epictetus he found severe condemnation of the Christians as fanatics.

Stoicism enjoined upon men obedience to the law, endurance of evil conditions, and patience under misfortunes. The Christians openly defied the laws; they struck the images of the gods, they scoffed at the established religion and its ministers. They welcomed death; they invited it. To Marcus Aurelius, as he says in his 'Meditations,' death had no terrors. The wise man stood, like the trained soldier, ready to be called into action, ready to depart from life when the Supreme Ruler called him; but it was also, according to the Stoic, no less the duty of a man to remain until he was called, and it certainly was not his duty to invite destruction by abuse of all other religions and by contempt for the distinctive deities of the Roman faith. The Roman State was tolerant of all religions so long as they were tolerant of others. Christianity was intolerant of all other religions; it condemned them all. In persecuting what he regarded as a «pernicious sect» the Emperor regarded himself only as the conservator of the peace and the welfare of the realm. The truth is, that Marcus Aurelius enacted no new laws on the subject of the Christians. He even lessened the dangers to which they were exposed. On this subject one of the Fathers of the Church, Tertullian, bears witness. He says in his address to the Roman officials:—«Consult your annals, and you will find that the princes who have been cruel to us are those whom it was held an honor to have as persecutors. On the contrary, of all princes who have known human and Divine law, name one of them who has persecuted the Christians. We might even cite one of them who declared himself their protector,—the wise Marcus Aurelius. If he did not openly revoke the edicts against our brethren, he destroyed the effect of them by the severe penalties he instituted against their accusers.» This statement would seem to dispose effectually of the charge of cruel persecution brought so often against the kindly and tender-hearted Emperor.

Of the appointment of Commodus as his successor, it may be said that the paternal heart hoped against hope for filial excellence. Marcus Aurelius believed, as clearly appears from many passages in the 'Meditations,' that men did not do evil willingly but through ignorance; and that when the exceeding beauty of goodness had been fully disclosed to them, the depravity of evil conduct would appear no less clearly. The Emperor who, when the head of his rebellious general was brought to him, grieved because that general had not lived to be forgiven; the ruler who burned unread all treasonable correspondence, would not, nay, could not believe in the existence of such an inhuman monster as Commodus proved himself to be. The appointment of Commodus was a calamity of the most terrific character; but it testifies in trumpet tones to the nobility of the Emperor's heart, the sincerity of his own belief in the triumph of right and justice.

The volume of the ‘Meditations’ is the best mirror of the Emperor's soul. Therein will be found expressed delicately but unmistakably much of the sorrow that darkened his life. As the book proceeds the shadows deepen, and in the latter portion his loneliness is painfully apparent. Yet he never lost hope or faith, or failed for one moment in his duty as a man, a philosopher, and an Emperor. In the deadly marshes and in the great forests which stretched beside the Danube, in his mortal sickness, in the long nights when weakness and pain rendered sleep impossible, it is not difficult to imagine him in his tent, writing, by the light of his solitary lamp, the immortal thoughts which alone soothed his soul; thoughts which have outlived the centuries — not perhaps wholly by chance — to reveal to men in nations then unborn, on continents whose very existence was then unknown, the Godlike qualities of one of the noblest of the sons of men.

The best literal translation of the work into English thus far made is that of George Long. It is published by Little, Brown & Co. of Boston. A most admirable work, ‘The Life of Marcus Aurelius,’ by Paul Barron Watson, published by Harper & Brothers, New York, will repay careful reading. Other general works to be consulted are as follows: — ‘Seekers After God,’ by Rev. F. W. Farrar, Macmillan & Co. (1890); and ‘Classical Essays,’ by F. W. H. Myers, Macmillan & Co. (1888). Both of these contain excellent articles upon the Emperor. Consult also Renan's ‘History of the Origins of Christianity,’ Book vii., Marcus Aurelius, translation published by Mathieson & Co. (London, 1896); ‘Essay on Marcus Aurelius’ by Matthew Arnold, in his ‘Essays in Criticism,’ Macmillan & Co. Further information may also be had in Montesquieu's ‘Decadence of the Romans,’ Sismondi's ‘Fall of the Roman Empire,’ and Gibbon's ‘Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.’

James F. Gluck

EXCERPTS FROM THE ‘MEDITATIONS’

The Brotherhood of Man

Begin thy morning with these thoughts: I shall meet the meddler, the ingrate, the scorner, the hypocrite, the envious man, the cynic. These men are such because they know not to discern the difference between good and evil. But I know that Goodness is Beauty and that Evil is Loathsomeness: I know that the real nature of the evil-doer is akin to mine, not only physically but in a unity of intelligence and in participation in the Divine Nature. Therefore I know that I cannot be harmed by such persons, nor can they thrust upon me what is base. I know, too, that I should not be angry with my kinsmen nor hate them, because we are all made to work together fitly like the feet, the hands, the eyelids, the rows of the upper and the lower teeth. To be at strife one with another is therefore contrary to our real nature; and to be angry with one another, to despise one another, *is* to be at strife one with another. (Book ii., § 1.)

Fashion thyself to the circumstances of thy lot. The men whom Fate hath made thy comrades here, love; and love them in sincerity and in truth. (Book vi., § 39.)

This is distinctive of men,—to love those who do wrong. And this thou shalt do if thou forget not that they are thy kinsmen, and that they do wrong through ignorance and not through design; that ere long thou and they will be dead; and more than all, that the evil-doer hath really done thee no evil, since he hath left thy conscience unharmed. (Book viii., § 22.)

THE SUPREME NOBILITY OF DUTY

As a Roman and as a man, strive steadfastly every moment to do thy duty, with dignity, sincerity, and loving-kindness, freely and justly, and freed from all disquieting thought concerning any other thing. And from such thought thou wilt be free if every act be done as though it were thy last, putting away from thee slothfulness, all loathing to do what Reason bids thee, all dissimulation, selfishness, and discontent with thine appointed lot. Behold, then, how few are the things needful for a life which will flow onward like a quiet stream, blessed even as the life of the gods. For he who so lives, fulfills their will. (Book ii., § 5.)

So long as thou art doing thy duty, heed not warmth nor cold, drowsiness nor wakefulness, life, nor impending death; nay, even in the very act of death, which is indeed only one of the acts of life, it suffices to do well what then remains to be done. (Book vi., § 2.)

I strive to do my duty; to all other considerations I am indifferent, whether they be material things or unreasoning and ignorant people. (Book vi., § 22.)

The Future Life. Immortality

This very moment thou mayest die. Think, act, as if this were now to befall thee. Yet fear not death. If there are gods they will do thee no evil. If there are not gods, or if they care not for the welfare of men, why should I care to live in a Universe that is devoid of Divine beings or of any providential care? But, verily, there are Divine beings, and they do concern themselves with the welfare of men; and they have given unto him all power not to fall into any real evil. If, indeed, what men call misfortunes were really evils, then from these things also, man would have been given the power to free himself. But — thou sayest — are not death, dishonor, pain, really evils? Reflect that if they were, it is incredible that the Ruler of the Universe has, through ignorance, overlooked these things, or has not had the power or the skill to prevent them; and that thereby what is real evil befalls good and bad alike. For true it is that life and death, honor and dishonor, pain and pleasure, come impartially to the good and to the bad. But none of these things can affect our lives if they do not affect our true selves. Now our real selves they do not affect either for better or for worse; and therefore such things are not really good or evil. (Book ii., § 11.)

If our spirits live, how does Space suffice for all during all the ages? Well, how does the earth contain the bodies of those who have been buried therein during all the ages? In the latter case, the decomposition and — after a certain period — the dispersion of the bodies already buried, affords room for other bodies; so, in the former case, the souls which pass into Space, after a certain period are purged of their grosser elements and become ethereal, and glow with the glory of flame as they meet and mingle with the Creative Energy of the world. And thereby there is room for other souls which in their turn pass into Space.

This, then, is the explanation that may be given, if souls continue to exist at all.

Moreover, in thinking of all the bodies which the earth contains, we must have in mind not only the bodies which are buried therein, but also the vast number of animals which are the daily food of ourselves and also of the entire animal creation itself. Yet these, too, Space contains; for on the one hand they are changed into blood which becomes part of the bodies that are buried in the earth, and on the other hand these are changed into the ultimate elements of fire or air. (Book iv., § 21.)

I am spirit and body: neither will pass into nothingness, since neither came therefrom; and therefore every part of me, though changed in form, will continue to be a part of the Universe, and that part will change into another part, and so on through all the ages. And therefore, through such changes I myself exist; and, in like manner, those who preceded me and those who will follow me will exist forever,— a conclusion equally true though the Universe itself be dissipated at prescribed cycles of time. (Book v., § 13.)

How can it be that the gods, who have clothed the Universe with such beauty and ordered all things with such loving-kindness for the welfare of man, have neglected this alone, that the best men — the men who walked as it were with the Divine Being, and who, by their acts of righteousness and by their reverent service, dwelt ever in his presence — should never live again when once they have died? If this be really true, then be satisfied that it is best that it should be so, else it would have been otherwise ordained. For whatever is right and just is possible; and therefore, if it were in accord with the will of the Divine Being that we should live after death — so it would have been. But because it is otherwise,— if indeed it be otherwise,— rest thou satisfied that this also is just and right.

Moreover, is it not manifest to thee that in inquiring so curiously concerning these things, thou art questioning God himself as to what is right, and that this thou wouldst not do didst thou not believe in his supreme goodness and wisdom? Therefore, since in these we believe, we may also believe that in the government of the Universe nothing that is right and just has been overlooked or forgotten. (Book xii., § 5.)

The Universal Beauty of the World

To him who hath a true insight into the real nature of the Universe, every change in everything therein that is a part thereof seems appropriate and delightful. The bread that is over-baked so that it cracks and bursts asunder hath not the form desired by the baker; yet none the less it hath a beauty of its own, and is most tempting to the palate. Figs bursting in their ripeness, olives near even unto decay, have yet in their broken ripeness a distinctive beauty. Shocks of corn bending down in their fullness, the lion's mane, the wild boar's mouth all flecked with foam, and many other things of the same kind, though perhaps not pleasing in and of themselves, yet as necessary parts of the Universe created by the Divine Being they add to the beauty of the Universe, and inspire a feeling of pleasure. So that if a man hath appreciation of and an insight into the purpose of the Universe, there is scarcely a portion thereof that will not to him in a sense seem adapted to give delight. In this sense the open jaws of wild beasts will appear no less pleasing than their prototypes in the realm of art. Even in old men and women he will be able to perceive a distinctive maturity and seemliness, while the winsome bloom of youth he can contemplate with eyes free from lascivious desire. And in like manner it will be with very many things which to every one may not seem pleasing, but which will certainly rejoice the man who is a true student of Nature and her works. (Book iii., § 2.)

The Good Man

In the mind of him who is pure and good will be found neither corruption nor defilement nor any malignant taint. Unlike the actor who leaves the stage before his part is played, the life of such a man is complete whenever death may come. He is neither cowardly nor presuming; not enslaved to life nor indifferent to its duties; and in him is found nothing worthy of condemnation nor that which putteth to shame. (Book iii., § 8.)

Test by a trial how excellent is the life of the good man;—the man who rejoices at the portion given him in the universal lot and abides therein, content; just in all his ways and kindly minded toward all men. (Book iv., § 25.)

This is moral perfection: to live each day as though it were the last; to be tranquil, sincere, yet not indifferent to one's fate. (Book vii., § 69.)

THE BREVITY OF LIFE

Cast from thee all other things and hold fast to a few precepts such as these: forget not that every man's real life is but the present moment,—an indivisible point of time,—and that all the rest of his life hath either passed away or is uncertain. Short, then, the time that any man may live; and small the earthly niche wherein he hath his home; and short is longest fame,—a whisper passed from race to race of dying men, ignorant concerning themselves, and much less really knowing thee, who died so long ago. (Book iii., § 10.)

VANITY OF LIFE

Many are the doctors who have knit their brows over their patients and now are dead themselves; many are the astrologers who in their day esteemed themselves renowned in foretelling the death of others, yet now they too are dead. Many are the philosophers who have held countless discussions upon death and immortality, and yet themselves have shared the common lot; many the valiant warriors who have slain their thousands and yet have themselves been slain by Death; many are the rulers and the kings of the earth, who, in their arrogance, have exercised over others the power of life or death as though they were themselves beyond the hazard of Fate, and yet themselves have, in their turn, felt Death's remorseless power. Nay, even great cities — Helice, Pompeii, Herculaneum — have, so to speak, died utterly. Recall, one by one, the names of thy friends who have died; how many of these, having closed the eyes of their kinsmen, have in a brief time been buried also. To conclude: keep ever before thee the brevity and vanity of human life and all that is therein; for man is conceived to-day, and to-morrow will be a mummy or ashes. Pass, therefore, this moment of life in accord with the will of Nature, and depart in peace: even as does the olive, which in its season, fully ripe, drops to the ground, blessing its mother, the earth, which bore it, and giving thanks to the tree which put it forth. (Book iv., § 48.)

A simple yet potent help to enable one to despise Death is to recall those who, in their greed for life, tarried the longest here. Wherein had they really more than those who were cut off untimely in their bloom? Together, at last, somewhere, they all repose in death. Cadicianus, Fabius, Julianus, Lepidus, or any like them, who bore forth so many to the tomb, were, in their turn, borne thither also. Their longer span was but trivial! Think too, of the cares thereof, of the people with whom it was passed, of the infirmities of the flesh! All vanity! Think of the infinite deeps of Time in the past, of the infinite depths to be! And in that vast profound of Time, what difference is there between a life of three centuries and the three days' life of a little child! (Book iv., § 50.)

Think of the Universe of matter!—an atom thou! Think of the eternity of Time—thy predestined time but a moment! Reflect upon the great plan of Fate—how trivial this destiny of thine! (Book v., § 24.)

All things are enveloped in such darkness that they have seemed utterly incomprehensible to those who have led the philosophic life—and those too not a few in number, nor of ill-repute. Nay, even to the Stoics the course of affairs seems an enigma. Indeed, every conclusion reached seems tentative; for where is the man to be found who does not change his conclusions? Think too of the things men most desire,—riches, reputation, and the like,—and consider how ephemeral they are, how vain! A vile wretch, a common strumpet, or a thief, may possess them. Then think of the habits and manners of those about thee—how difficult it is to endure the least offensive of such people—nay how difficult, most of all, it is to endure one's self!

Amidst such darkness, then, and such unworthiness, amidst this eternal change, with all temporal things and even Time itself passing away, with all things moving in eternal motion, I cannot imagine what, in all this, is worthy of a man's esteem or serious effort. (Book v., § 10.)

DEATH

TO CEASE from bodily activity, to end all efforts of will and of thought, to stop all these forever, is no evil. For do but contemplate thine own life as a child, a growing lad, a youth, an old man: the change to each of these periods was the death of the period which preceded it. Why then fear the death of all these — the death of thyself? Think too of thy life under the care of thy grandfather, then of thy life under the care of thy mother, then under the care of thy father, and so on with every change that hath occurred in thy life, and then ask thyself concerning any change that hath yet to be, Is there anything to fear? And then shall all fear, even of the great change,— the change of death itself,— vanish and flee away. (Book ix., § 21.)

FAME

CONTEMPLATE men as from some lofty height. How innumerable seem the swarms of men! How infinite their pomps and ceremonies! How they wander to and fro upon the deep in fair weather and in storm! How varied their fate in their births, in their lives, in their deaths! Think of the lives of those who lived long ago, of those who shall follow thee, of those who now live in uncivilized lands who have not even heard of thy name, and, of those who have heard it, how many will soon forget it; of how many there are who now praise thee who will soon malign thee,— and thence conclude the vanity of fame, glory, reputation. (Book ix., § 30.)

PRAYER

THE gods are all-powerful or they are not. If they are not, why pray to them at all? If they are, why dost thou not pray to them to remove from thee all desire and all fear, rather than to ask from them the things thou longest for, or the removal of those things of which thou art in fear? For if the gods can aid men at all, surely they will grant this request. Wilt thou say that the removal of all fear and of all desire is within thine own power? If so, is it not better, then, to use the strength the gods have given, rather than in a servile and fawning way to long for those things which our will cannot obtain?

And who hath said to thee that the gods will not *strengthen* thy will? I say unto thee, begin to pray that this may come to pass, and thou shalt see what shall befall thee. One man prays that he may enjoy a certain woman: let thy prayer be to not have even the desire so to do. Another man prays that he may not be forced to do his duty: let thy prayer be that thou mayest not even desire to be relieved of its performance. Another man prays that he may not lose his beloved son: let thy prayer be that even the fear of losing him may be taken away. Let these be thy prayers, and thou shalt see what good will befall thee. (Book ix., § 41.)

Faith

The Universe is either a chaos or a fortuitous aggregation and dispersion of atoms; or else it is builded in order and harmony and ruled by Wisdom. If then it is the former, why should one wish to tarry in a hap-hazard disordered mass? Why should I be concerned except to know how soon I may cease to be? Why should I be disquieted concerning what I do, since whatever I may do, the elements of which I am composed will at last, at last be scattered? But if the latter thought be true, then I reverence the Divine One; I trust; I possess my soul in peace. (Book vi., § 10.)

Pain

If pain cannot be borne, we die. If it continue a long time it becomes endurable; and the mind, retiring into itself, can keep its own tranquillity and the true self be still unharmed. If the body feel the pain, let the body make its moan. (Book vii., § 30.)

Love and Forgiveness for the Evil-Doer

If it be in thy power, teach men to do better. If not, remember it is always in thy power to forgive. The gods are so merciful to those who err, that for some purposes they grant their aid to such men by conferring upon them health, riches, and honor. What prevents thee from doing likewise? (Book ix., § 11.)

Eternal Change the Law of the Universe

THINK, often, of how swiftly all things pass away and are no more — the works of Nature and the works of man. The substance of the Universe — matter — is like unto a river that flows on forever. All things are not only in a constant state of change, but they are the cause of constant and infinite change in other things. Upon a narrow ledge thou standest! Behind thee, the bottomless abyss of the Past! In front of thee, the Future that will swallow up all things that now are! Over what things, then, in this present life, wilt thou, O foolish man, be disquieted or exalted — making thyself wretched; seeing that they can vex thee only for a time — a brief, brief time! (Book v., § 23.)

The Perfect Liberty of the Good Man

PERADVENTURE men may curse thee, torture thee, kill thee; yet can all these things not prevent thee from keeping at all times thy thoughts pure, considerate, sober, and just. If one should stand beside a limpid stream and cease not to revile it, would the spring stop pouring forth its refreshing waters? Nay, if such an one should even cast into the stream mud and mire, would not the stream quickly scatter it, and so bear it away that not even a trace would remain? How then wilt thou be able to have within thee not a mere well that may fail thee, but a fountain that shall never cease to flow? By wonting thyself every moment to independence in judgment, joined together with serenity of thought and simplicity in act and bearing. (Book viii., § 51.)

The Harmony and Unity of the Universe

O DIVINE Spirit of the Universe, Thy will, Thy wish is mine! Calmly I wait Thy appointed times, which cannot come too early or too late! Thy providences are all fruitful to me! Thou art the source, Thou art the stay, Thou art the end of all things. The poet says of his native city, «Dear city of Cecrops»; and shall I not say of the Universe, «Beloved City of God»? (Book iv., § 23.)

EITHER there is a predestined order in the Universe, or else it is mere aggregation, fortuitous yet not without a certain kind of order. For how within thyself can a certain system exist and yet the entire Universe be chaos? And especially when in the

Universe all things, though separate and divided, yet work together in unity? (Book iv., § 27.)

Think always of the Universe as one living organism, composed of one material substance and one soul. Observe how all things are the product of a single conception—the conception of a living organism. Observe how one force is the cause of the motion of all things: that all existing things are the concurrent causes of all that is to be—the eternal warp and woof of the ever-weaving web of existence. (Book iv., § 40.)

The Conduct of Life

Country houses, retreats in the mountains or by the sea—these things men seek out for themselves; and often thou, too, dost most eagerly desire such things. But this does but betoken the greatest ignorance; for thou art able, when thou desirest, to retreat into thyself. No otherwhere can a man find a retreat more quiet and free from care than in his own soul; and most of all, when he hath such rules of conduct that if faithfully remembered, they will give to him perfect equanimity,—for equanimity is naught else than a mind harmoniously disciplined. Cease not then to betake thyself to this retreat, there to refresh thyself. Let thy rules of conduct be few and well settled; so that when thou hast thought thereon, straightway they will suffice to thoroughly purify the soul that possesses them, and to send thee back, restless no more, to the things to the which thou must return. With what indeed art thou disquieted? With the wickedness of men? Meditate on the thought that men do not do evil of set purpose. Remember also how many in the past, who, after living in enmity, suspicion, hatred, and strife one with another, now lie prone in death and are but ashes. Fret then no more. But perhaps thou art troubled concerning the portion decreed to thee in the Universe? Remember this alternative: either there is a Providence or simply matter! Recall all the proofs that the world is, as it were, a city or a commonwealth! But perhaps the desires of the body still torment thee? Forget not, then, that the mind, when conscious of its real self, when self-reliant, shares not the agitations of the body, be they great or small. Recall too all thou hast learned (and now holdest as true) concerning pleasure and pain. But perhaps what men call Fame allures thee? Behold how quickly all things are forgotten!

Before us, after us, the formless Void of endless ages! How vain is human praise! How fickle and undiscriminating those who seem to praise! How limited the sphere of the greatest fame! For the whole earth is but a point in space, thy dwelling-place a tiny nook therein. How few are those who dwell therein, and what manner of men are those who will praise thee!

Therefore, forget not to retire into thine own little country place,—thyself. Above all, be not diverted from thy course. Be serene, be free, contemplate all things as a man, as a lover of his kind, and of his country—yet withal as a being born to die. Have readiest to thy hand, above all others, these two thoughts: one, that *things* cannot touch the soul; the other, that things are perpetually changing and ceasing to be. Remember how many of these changes thou thyself hast seen! The Universe is change. But as thy thoughts are, so thy life shall be. (Book iv., § 3.)

All things that befall thee should seem to thee as natural as roses in spring or fruits in autumn: such things, I mean, as disease, death, slander, dissimulation, and all other things which give pleasure or pain to foolish men. (Book iv., § 44.)

Be thou like a lofty headland. Endlessly against it dash the waves; yet it stands unshaken, and lulls to rest the fury of the sea. (Book iv., § 49.)

"Unhappy me upon whom this misfortune hath fallen!"—nay, rather thou shouldst say, "Fortunate I, that having met with such a misfortune, I am able to endure it without complaining; in the present not dismayed, in the future dreading no evil. Such a misadventure might have befallen a man who could not, perchance, have endured it without grievous suffering." Why then shouldst thou call *anything* that befalls thee a misfortune, and not the rather a blessing? Is that a "misfortune," in all cases, which does not defeat the purpose of man's nature? and does that defeat man's nature which his *Will* can accept? And what that *Will* can accept, thou knowest. Can this misadventure, then, prevent thy Will from being just, magnanimous, temperate, circumspect, free from rashness or error, considerate, independent?

Can it prevent thy Will from being, in short, all that becomes a man? Remember, then, should anything befall thee which might cause thee to complain, to fortify thyself with this truth: this is not a misfortune, while to endure it nobly is a blessing. (Book iv., § 49.)

Be not annoyed or dismayed or despondent if thou art not able to do all things in accord with the rules of right conduct. When thou hast not succeeded, renew thy efforts, and be serene if, in most things, thy conduct is such as becomes a man. Love and pursue the philosophic life. Seek Philosophy, not as thy taskmaster but to find a medicine for all thy ills, as thou wouldst seek balm for thine eyes, a bandage for a sprain, a lotion for a fever. So it shall come to pass that the voice of Reason shall guide thee and bring to thee rest and peace. Remember, too, that Philosophy enjoins only such things as are in accord with thy better nature. The trouble is, that in thy heart thou preferrest those things which are not in accord with thy better nature. For thou sayest, « What can be more delightful than these things? » But is not the word « delightful » in this sense misleading? Are not magnanimity, broad-mindedness, sincerity, equanimity, and a reverent spirit more « delightful »? Indeed, what is more « delightful » than Wisdom, if so be thou wilt but reflect upon the strength and contentment of mind and the happiness of life that spring from the exercise of the powers of thy reason and thine intelligence? (Book v., § 9.)

As are thy wonted thoughts, so is thy mind; and the soul is tinged by the coloring of the mind. Let then thy mind be constantly suffused with such thoughts as these: Where it is possible for a man to live, there he can live nobly. But suppose he must live in a palace? Be it so; even there he can live nobly. (Book v., § 16.)

Live with the gods! And he so lives who at all times makes it manifest that he is content with his predestined lot, fulfilling the entire will of the indwelling spirit given to man by the Divine Ruler, and which is in truth nothing else than the Understanding—the Reason of man. (Book v., § 27.)

Seek the solitude of thy spirit. This is the law of the indwelling Reason — to be self-content and to abide in peace when what is right and just hath been done. (Book vii., § 28.)

* * *

Let thine eyes follow the stars in their courses as though their movements were thine own. Meditate on the eternal transformation of Matter. Such thoughts purge the mind of earthly passion and desire. (Book vii., § 45.)

* * *

Search thou thy heart! Therein is the fountain of good! Do thou but dig, and abundantly the stream shall gush forth. (Book vii., § 59.)

* * *

Be not unmindful of the graces of life. Let thy body be stalwart, yet not ungainly either in motion or in repose. Let not thy face alone, but thy whole body, make manifest the alertness of thy mind. Yet let all this be without affectation. (Book vii., § 60.)

* * *

Thy breath is part of the all-encircling air, and is one with it. Let thy mind be part, no less, of that Supreme Mind comprehending all things. For verily, to him who is willing to be inspired thereby, the Supreme Mind flows through all things and permeates all things as truly as the air exists for him who will but breathe. (Book viii., § 54.)

* * *

Men are created that they may live for each other. Teach them to be better or bear with them as they are. (Book viii., § 59.)

* * *

Write no more, Antoninus, about what a good man is or what he ought to do. *Be* a good man. (Book x., § 16.)

* * *

Look steadfastly at any created thing. See! it is changing, melting into corruption, and ready to be dissolved. In its essential nature, it was born but to die. (Book x., § 18.)

Co-workers are we all, toward one result. Some, consciously and of set purpose; others, unwittingly even as men who sleep, — of whom Heraclitus (I think it is he) says they also are co-workers in the events of the Universe. In diverse fashion also men work; and abundantly, too, work the fault-finders and the hinderers, — for even of such as these the Universe hath need. It rests then with thee to determine with what workers thou wilt place thyself; for He who governs all things will without failure place thee at thy proper task, and will welcome thee to some station among those who work and act together. (Book vi., § 42.)

Unconstrained and in supreme joyousness of soul thou mayest live though all men revile thee as they list, and though wild beasts rend in pieces the unworthy garment — thy body. For what prevents thee, in the midst of all this, from keeping thyself in profound calm, with a true judgment of thy surroundings and a helpful knowledge of the things that are seen? So that the Judgment may say to whatever presents itself, "In truth this is what thou really art, howsoever thou appearest to men;" and thy Knowledge may say to whatsoever may come beneath its vision, "Thee I sought; for whatever presents itself to me is fit material for nobility in personal thought and public conduct; in short, for skill in work for man or for God." For all things which befall us are related to God or to man, and are not new to us or hard to work upon, but familiar and serviceable. (Book vii., § 68.)

When thou art annoyed at some one's impudence, straightway ask thyself, "Is it possible that there should be no impudent men in the world?" It is impossible. Ask not then the impossible. For such an one is but one of these impudent persons who needs must be in the world. Keep before thee like conclusions also concerning the rascal, the untrustworthy one, and all evil-doers. Then, when it is quite clear to thy mind that such men must needs exist, thou shalt be the more forgiving toward each one of their number. This also will aid thee to observe, whensoever occasion comes, what power for good, Nature hath given to man to frustrate such viciousness. She hath bestowed upon man Patience as an antidote to the stupid man, and against another man some other power for good. Besides, it is wholly in thine own power to teach new things to the one who hath erred, for every one who errs hath but missed the appointed path and wandered away. Reflect, and thou wilt discover that no one of these with whom thou art annoyed hath done aught to debase thy *mind*, and that is the only real evil that can befall thee.

Moreover, wherein is it wicked or surprising that the ignorant man should act ignorantly? Is not the error really thine own in not foreseeing that such an one would do as he did? If thou hadst but taken thought thou wouldst have known he would be prone to err, and it is only because thou hast forgotten to use thy Reason that thou art surprised at his deed. Above all, when thou condemnest another as untruthful, examine thyself closely; for upon thee rests the blame, in that thou dost trust to such an one to keep his promise. If thou didst bestow upon him thy bounty, thine is the blame not to have given it freely, and without expectation of good to thee, save the doing of the act itself. What more dost thou wish than to do good to man? Doth not this suffice,—that thou hast done what conforms to thy true nature? Must thou then have a reward, as though the eyes demanded pay for seeing or the feet for walking? For even as these are formed for such work, and by co-operating in their distinctive duty come into their own, even so man (by his real nature disposed to do good), when he hath done some good deed, or in any other way furthered the Commonweal, acts according to his own nature, and in so doing hath all that is truly his own. (Book ix., § 42.)

O Man, thou hast been a citizen of this great State, the Universe! What matters what thy prescribed time hath been, five years or three? What the law prescribes is just to every one.

Why complain, then, if thou art sent away from the State, not by a tyrant or an unjust judge, but by Nature who led thee thither,—even as the manager excuses from the stage an actor whom he hath employed?

"But I have played three acts only?"

True. But in the drama of thy life three acts conclude the play. For what its conclusion shall be, He determines who created it and now ends it; and with either of these thou hast naught to do. Depart thou, then, well pleased; for He who dismisses thee is well pleased also. (Book xii., § 36.)

Be not disquieted lest, in the days to come, some misadventure befall thee. The Reason which now sufficeth thee will then be with thee, should there be the need. (Book vii., § 8.)

To the wise man the dictates of Reason seem the instincts of Nature. (Book vii., § 11.)

My true self—the philosophic mind—hath but one dread: the dread lest I do something unworthy of a man, or that I may act in an unseemly way or at an improper time. (Book vii., § 20.)

Accept with joy the Fate that befalls thee. Thine it is and not another's. What then could be better for thee? (Book vii., § 57.)

See to it that thou art humane to those who are not humane. (Book vii., § 65.)

He who does *not* act, often commits as great a wrong as he who acts. (Book ix., § 5.)

The wrong that another has done—let alone! Add not to it thine own. (Book ix., § 20.)

How powerful is man! He is able to do all that God wishes him to do. He is able to accept all that God sends upon him. (Book xii., § 11.)

A lamp sends forth its light until it is completely extinguished. Shall Truth and Justice and Equanimity suffer abatement in thee until all are extinguished in death? (Book xii., § 15.)

JANE AUSTEN

(1775–1817)

The biography of one of the greatest English novelists might be written in a dozen lines, so simple, so tranquil, so fortunate was her life. Jane Austen, the second daughter of an English clergyman, was born at Steventon, in Hampshire, in 1775. Her father had been known at Oxford as «the handsome proctor,» and all his children inherited good looks. He was accomplished enough to fit his boys for the University, and the atmosphere of the household was that of culture, good breeding, and healthy fun. Mrs. Austen was a clever woman, full of epigram and humor in conversation, and rather famous in her own coterie for improvised verses and satirical hits at her friends. The elder daughter, Cassandra, adored by Jane, who was three years her junior, seems to have had a rare balance and common-sense which exercised great influence over the more brilliant younger sister. Their mother declared that of the two girls, Cassandra had the merit of having her temper always under her control; and Jane the happiness of a temper that never required to be commanded.

Jane Austen

From her cradle, Jane Austen was used to hearing agreeable household talk, and the freest personal criticism on the men and women who made up her small, secluded world. The family circumstances were easy, and the family friendliness unlimited,—conditions determining, perhaps, the cheerful tone, the unexciting course, the sly fun and good-fellowship of her stories.

It was in this Steventon rectory, in the family room where the boys might be building their toy boats, or the parish poor folk complaining to «passon's madam,» or the county ladies paying visits of ceremony, in monstrous muffs, heelless slippers laced over open-worked silk stockings, short flounced skirts, and lutestring pelisses trimmed with «Irish,» or where tradesmen might be explaining their delinquencies, or farmers' wives growing voluble over foxes and young chickens—it was in the midst of this busy and noisy publicity, where nobody respected her employment, and where she was interrupted twenty times in an hour, that the shrewd and smiling social critic managed, before she was twenty-one, to write her famous ‘Pride and Prejudice.’ Here too ‘Sense and Sensibility’ was finished in 1797, and ‘Northanger Abbey’ in 1798. The first of these, submitted to a London publisher, was declined as unavailable, by return of post. The second, the gay and mocking ‘Northanger Abbey,’ was sold to a Bath bookseller for £10, and several years later bought back again, still unpublished, by one of Miss Austen's brothers. For the third story she seems not even to have sought a publisher. These three books, all written before she was twenty-five, were evidently the employment and delight of her leisure. The serious business of life was that which occupied other pretty girls of her time and her social position,—dressing, dancing, flirting, learning a new stitch at the embroidery frame, or a new air on «the instrument»; while all the time she was observing, with those soft hazel eyes of hers, what honest Nym calls the «humors» of the world about her. In 1801, the family removed to Bath, then the most fashionable watering-place in England. The gay life of the brilliant little city, the etiquette of the Pump Room and the Assemblies, regulated by the autocratic Beau Nash, the drives, the routs, the card parties, the toilets, the shops, the Parade, the general frivolity, pretension, and display of the eighteenth century Vanity Fair, had already been studied by the good-natured satirist on occasional visits, and already immortalized in the swiftly changing comedy scenes of ‘Northanger Abbey.’ But they tickled her fancy none the less, now that she lived among them, and she made use of them again in her later novel, ‘Persuasion.’

For a period of eight years, spent in Bath and in Southampton, Miss Austen wrote nothing save some fragments of ‘Lady Susan’ and ‘The Watsons,’ neither of them of great importance. In 1809 the lessened household, composed of the mother and her two daughters only, removed to the village of Chawton, on the estate of Mrs. Austen's third son; and here, in a rustic cottage, now become a place of pilgrimage, Jane Austen again took up her pen. She rewrote ‘Pride and Prejudice,’ she revised ‘Sense and Sensibility,’ and between February 1811 and August 1816 she completed ‘Mansfield Park,’ ‘Emma,’ and ‘Persuasion.’ At Chawton, as at Steventon, she had no study, and her stories were written on a little mahogany desk near a window in the family sitting-room, where she must often have been interrupted by the prototypes of her Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Bennet, Miss Bates, Mr. Collins, or Mrs. Norris. When at last she began to publish, her stories appeared in rapid succession: ‘Sense and Sensibility’ in 1811; ‘Pride and Prejudice’ early in 1813; ‘Mansfield Park’ in 1814; ‘Emma’ in 1816; ‘Northanger Abbey’ and ‘Persuasion’ in 1818, the year following her death. In January 1813 she wrote to her beloved Cassandra:—« I want to tell you that I have got my own darling child ('Pride and Prejudice') from London. We fairly set at it and read half the first volume to Miss B. She was amused, poor soul! . . . but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that *I* think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least, I do not know.» A month later she wrote:—« Upon the whole, however, I am quite vain enough, and well satisfied enough. The work is rather too light, and bright, and sparkling: it wants shade; it wants to be stretched out here and there with a long chapter of sense, if it could be had; if not, of solemn, specious nonsense, about something unconnected with the story; an essay on writing, a critique on Walter Scott, or the history of Bonaparte, or something that would form a contrast, and bring the reader with increased delight to the playfulness and epigrammatism of the general style!»

Thus she who laughed at everybody else laughed at herself, and set her critical instinct to estimate her own capacity. To Mr. Clarke, the librarian of Carlton House, who had requested her to « delineate a clergyman » of earnestness, enthusiasm, and learning, she replied:— « I am quite honored by your thinking me capable of drawing such a clergyman as you gave the sketch of in your note. But I assure you I am not. The comic part of the character I might be equal to, but not the good, the enthusiastic, the literary. . . . I think I may boast myself to be, with all possible vanity, the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress.» And when the same remarkable bibliophile suggested to her, on the approach of the marriage of the Princess Charlotte with Prince Leopold, that « an historical romance, illustrative of the august House of Coburg, would just now be very interesting,» she answered:—« I am fully sensible that an historical romance, founded on the House of Saxe-Coburg, might be much more to the purpose of profit or popularity than such pictures of domestic life in country villages as I deal in. But I could no more write a romance than an epic poem. I could not sit seriously down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to save my life; and if it were indispensable to keep it up, and never relax into laughing at myself or at other people, I am sure that I should be hung before I had finished the first chapter. No! I must keep to my own style, and go on in my own way: and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I shall totally fail in any other.» And again she writes: « What shall *I* do with your 'strong, manly, vigorous sketches, full of variety and glow'? How could I possibly join them on to the little bit (two inches wide) of ivory on which I work with so fine a brush as produces little effect, after much labor?»

Miss Austen read very little. She «detested quartos.» Richardson, Johnson, Crabbe, and Cowper seem to have been the only authors for whom she had an appreciation. She would sometimes say, in jest, that «if ever she married at all, she could fancy being Mrs. Crabbe!» But her bent of original composition, her amazing power of observation, her inexhaustible sense of humor, her absorbing interest in what she saw about her, were so strong that she needed no reinforcement of culture. It was no more in her power than it was in Wordsworth's to «gather a posy of other men's thoughts.»

During her lifetime she had not a single literary friend. Other women novelists possessed their sponsors and devotees. Miss Ferrier was the delight of a brilliant Edinboro' coterie. Miss Edgeworth was feasted and flattered, not only in England, but on the Continent; Miss Burney counted Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Windham, Sheridan, among the admiring friends who assured her that no flight in fiction or the drama was beyond her powers. But the creator of Elizabeth Bennet, of Emma, and of Mr. Collins, never met an author of eminence, received no encouragement to write except that of her own family, heard no literary talk, and obtained in her lifetime but the slightest literary recognition. It was long after her death that Walter Scott wrote in his journal:—«Read again, and for the third time at least, Miss Austen's finely written novel of 'Pride and Prejudice.' That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements and feelings and characters of ordinary life which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The Big Bow-wow strain I can do myself, like any now going; but the exquisite touch which renders commonplace things and characters interesting from the truth of the description and the sentiment is denied to me.» It was still later that Macaulay made his famous estimate of her genius:—«Shakespeare has neither equal nor second; but among those who, in the point we have noticed (the delineation of character), approached nearest the great master, we have no hesitation in placing Jane Austen as a woman of whom England may justly be proud. She has given us a multitude of characters, all, in a certain sense, commonplace, all such as we meet every day. Yet they are all as perfectly discriminated from each other as if they were the most eccentric of human beings. . . . And all this is done by touches so delicate that they elude analysis, that they defy the powers of description, and that we know them to exist only by the general effect to which they have contributed.» And a new generation had almost forgotten her name before the exacting Lewes wrote:—«To make our meaning precise, we would say that Fielding and Jane Austen are the greatest novelists in the English language. . . . We would rather have written ‹Pride and Prejudice,› or ‹Tom Jones,› than any of the Waverley novels. . . . The greatness of Miss Austen (her marvelous dramatic power) seems more than anything in Scott akin to Shakespeare.»

The six novels which have made so great a reputation for their author relate the least sensational of histories in the least sensational way. ‹Sense and Sensibility› might be called a novel with a purpose, that purpose being to portray the dangerous haste with which sentiment degenerates into sentimentality; and because of its purpose, the story discloses a less excellent art than its fellows. ‹Pride and Prejudice› finds its motive in the crass pride of birth and place that characterize the really generous and high-minded hero, Darcy, and the fierce resentment of his claims to love and respect on the part of the clever, high-tempered, and chivalrous heroine, Elizabeth Bennet. ‹Northanger Abbey› is a laughing skit at the school of Mrs. Radcliffe; ‹Persuasion,› a simple story of upper middle-class society, of which the most charming of her charming girls, Anne Elliot, is the heroine; ‹Mansfield Park,› a new and fun-loving version of ‹Cinderella›; and finally ‹Emma,›—the favorite with most readers, concerning which Miss Austen said, «I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like,»—the history of the blunders of a bright, kind-hearted, and really clever girl, who contrives as much discomfort for her friends as stupidity or ill-nature could devise.

Numberless as are the novelist's characters, no two clergymen, no two British matrons, no two fussy spinsters, no two men of fashion, no two heavy fathers, no two smart young ladies, no two heroines, are alike. And this variety results from the absolute fidelity of each character to the law of its own development, each one growing from within and not being simply described from without. Nor are the circumstances which she permits herself to use less genuine than her people. What surrounds them is what one must expect; what happens to them is seen to be inevitable.

The low and quiet key in which her «situations» are pitched produces one artistic gain which countervails its own loss of immediate intensity: the least touch of color shows strongly against that subdued background. A very slight catastrophe among those orderly scenes of peaceful life has more effect than the noisier incidents and contrived convulsions of more melodramatic novels. Thus, in ‹Mansfield Park› the result of private theatricals, including many rehearsals of stage love-making, among a group of young people who show no very strong principles or firmness of character, appears in a couple of elopements which break up a family, occasion a pitiable scandal, and spoil the career of an able, generous, and highly promising young man. To most novelists an incident of this sort would seem too ineffective: in her hands it strikes us as what in fact it is — a tragic misfortune and the ruin of two lives.

In a word, it is life which Miss Austen sees with unerring vision and draws with unerring touch; so that above all other writers of English fiction she seems entitled to the tribute which an Athenian critic gave to an earlier and more famous realist,—

«O life! O Menander!
Which of you two is the plagiarist?»

AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE

From ‹Pride and Prejudice›

The next day opened a new scene at Longbourn. Mr. Collins made his declaration in form. Having resolved to do it without loss of time, as his leave of absence extended only to the following Saturday, and having no feelings of diffidence to make it distressing to himself even at the moment, he set about it in a very orderly manner, with all the observances which he supposed a regular part of the business. On finding Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth, and one of the younger girls together, soon after breakfast, he addressed the mother in these words: —

« May I hope, madam, for your interest with your fair daughter Elizabeth, when I solicit for the honor of a private audience with her in the course of this morning? »

Before Elizabeth had time for anything but a blush of surprise, Mrs. Bennet instantly answered: — « Oh, dear. Yes; certainly. I am sure Lizzy will be very happy — I am sure she can have no objection. Come, Kitty, I want you upstairs.» And, gathering her work together, she was hastening away, when Elizabeth called out: —

« Dear ma'am, do not go. I beg you will not go. Mr. Collins must excuse me. He can have nothing to say to me that anybody need not hear. I am going away myself.»

« No, no; nonsense, Lizzy. I desire you will stay where you are.» And upon Elizabeth's seeming really, with vexed and embarrassed looks, about to escape, she added, « Lizzy, I *insist* upon your staying and hearing Mr. Collins.»

Elizabeth would not oppose such an injunction; and a moment's consideration making her also sensible that it would be wisest to get it over as soon and as quietly as possible, she sat down again, and tried to conceal by incessant employment the feelings which were divided between distress and diversion. Mrs. Bennet and Kitty walked off; and as soon as they were gone, Mr. Collins began:—

"Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that your modesty, so far from doing you any disservice, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there *not* been this little unwillingness; but allow me to assure you that I have your respected mother's permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble: my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I am run away with by my feelings on this subject, perhaps it will be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying—and moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did."

The idea of Mr. Collins, with all his solemn composure, being run away with by his feelings, made Elizabeth so near laughing that she could not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him further, and he continued:—

"My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly, —which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier,—that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honor of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked, too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh's footstool—that she said, 'Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry. Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman, for *my* sake; and for your *own*, let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her!' Allow me, by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favor of matrimony; it remains to be told why my views are directed to Longbourn instead of my own neighborhood, where, I assure you, there are many amiable young women. But the fact is, that being, as I am, to inherit this estate after the death of your honored father (who, however, may live many years longer), I could not satisfy myself without resolving to choose a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible, when the melancholy event takes place,—which, however, as I have already said, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now, nothing remains for me but to assure you, in the most animated language, of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with; and that one thousand pounds in the four per cents., which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent; and you may assure yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married."

It was absolutely necessary to interrupt him now.

"You are too hasty, sir," she cried. "You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honor of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them."

"I am not now to learn," replied Mr. Collins, with a formal wave of the hand, "that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for their favor; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second, or even a third time. I am therefore by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long."

"Upon my word, sir," cried Elizabeth, "your hope is rather an extraordinary one, after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make *me* happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make *you* so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me, I am persuaded she would find me in every respect ill qualified for the situation.»

«Were it certain that Lady Catherine would think so,» said Mr. Collins, very gravely— «but I cannot imagine that her ladyship would at all disapprove of you. And you may be certain that when I have the honor of seeing her again, I shall speak in the highest terms of your modesty, economy, and other amiable qualifications.»

«Indeed, Mr. Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and by refusing your hand do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach. This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally settled.» And rising as she thus spoke, she would have quitted the room had not Mr. Collins thus addressed her:—

«When I do myself the honor of speaking to you next on the subject, I shall hope to receive a more favorable answer than you have now given me: though I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application; and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character.»

«Really, Mr. Collins,» cried Elizabeth, with some warmth, «you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one.»

«You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusal of my addresses is merely a thing of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these:—It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the family of De Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favor; and you should take it into further consideration that, in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. Your portion is unhappily so small that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females."

"I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretensions whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honor you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart."

"You are uniformly charming!" cried he, with an air of awkward gallantry; "and I am persuaded that when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable."

To such perseverance in willful self-deception Elizabeth would make no reply, and immediately and in silence withdrew; determined, if he persisted in considering her repeated refusals as flattering encouragement, to apply to her father, whose negative might be uttered in such a manner as must be decisive, and whose behavior at least could not be mistaken for the affectation and coquetry of an elegant female.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

From 'Pride and Prejudice'

[Lydia Bennet has eloped with the worthless rake Wickham, who has no intention of marrying her.]

Mrs. Bennet, to whose apartment they all repaired, after a few minutes' conversation together, received them exactly as might be expected: with tears and lamentations of regret, invectives against the villainous conduct of Wickham, and complaints of her own suffering and ill-usage;—blaming everybody but the person to whose ill-judging indulgence the errors of her daughter must be principally owing.

"If I had been able," said she, "to carry my point in going to Brighton with all my family, *this* would not have happened; but poor, dear Lydia had nobody to take care of her. Why did the Forsters ever let her go out of their sight? I am sure there was some great neglect or other on their side, for she is not the kind of girl to do such a thing, if she had been well looked after. I always thought they were very unfit to have the charge of her; but I was overruled, as I always am. Poor, dear child! And now here's Mr. Bennet gone away, and I know he will fight Wickham, wherever he meets him, and then he will be killed, and what is to become of us all? The Collinses will turn us out, before he is cold in his grave; and if you are not kind to us, brother, I do not know what we shall do."

They all exclaimed against such terrific ideas; and Mr. Gardiner, after general assurances of his affection for her and all her family, told her that he meant to be in London the very next day, and would assist Mr. Bennet in every endeavor for recovering Lydia.

"Do not give way to useless alarm," added he: "though it is right to be prepared for the worst, there is no occasion to look on it as certain. It is not quite a week since they left Brighton. In a few days more, we may gain some news of them; and till we know that they are not married, and have no design of marrying, do not let us give the matter over as lost. As soon as I get to town, I shall go to my brother, and make him come home with me, to Grace-church-street, and then we may consult together as to what is to be done."

"Oh! my dear brother," replied Mrs. Bennet, "that is exactly what I could most wish for. And now do, when you get to town, find them out, wherever they may be; and if they are not married already, *make* them marry. And as for wedding clothes, do not let them wait for that, but tell Lydia she shall have as much money as she chooses to buy them, after they are married. And above all things, keep Mr. Bennet from fighting. Tell him what a dreadful state I am in—that I am frightened out of my wits; and have such tremblings, such flutterings, all over me, such spasms in my side, and pains in my head, and such beatings at heart, that I can get no rest by night nor by day. And tell my dear Lydia not to give any directions about her clothes till she has seen me, for she does not know which are the best warehouses. Oh! brother, how kind you are! I know you will contrive it all.»

But Mr. Gardiner, though he assured her again of his earnest endeavors in the cause, could not avoid recommending moderation to her, as well in her hopes as her fears; and after talking with her in this manner till dinner was on the table, they left her to vent all her feelings on the housekeeper, who attended, in the absence of her daughters.

Though her brother and sister were persuaded that there was no real occasion for such a seclusion from the family, they did not attempt to oppose it, for they knew that she had not prudence enough to hold her tongue before the servants, while they waited at table, and judged it better that one only of the household, and the one whom they could most trust, should comprehend all her fears and solicitude on the subject.

In the dining-room they were soon joined by Mary and Kitty, who had been too busily engaged in their separate apartments to make their appearance before. One came from her books, and the other from her toilette. The faces of both, however, were tolerably calm; and no change was visible in either, except that the loss of her favorite sister, or the anger which she had herself incurred in the business, had given something more of fretfulness than usual to the accents of Kitty. As for Mary, she was mistress enough of herself to whisper to Elizabeth, with a countenance of grave reflection, soon after they were seated at table:—

«This is a most unfortunate affair; and will probably be much talked of. But we must stem the tide of malice, and pour into the wounded bosoms of each other the balm of sisterly consolation.»

Then, perceiving in Elizabeth no inclination of replying, she added, «Unhappy as the event must be for Lydia, we may draw from it this useful lesson: that loss of virtue in a female is irretrievable—that one false step involves her in endless ruin—that her reputation is no less brittle than it is beautiful—and that she cannot be too much guarded in her behavior towards the undeserving of the other sex.»

Elizabeth lifted up her eyes in amazement, but was too much oppressed to make any reply.

A LETTER OF CONDOLENCE

From ‹Pride and Prejudice›

MR. COLLINS TO MR. BENNET, ON HIS DAUGHTER'S ELOPEMENT WITH A RAKE

My Dear Sir:

I FEEL myself called upon, by our relationship and my situation in life, to condole with you on the grievous affliction you are now suffering under, of which we were yesterday informed by letter from Hertfordshire. Be assured, my dear sir, that Mrs. Collins and myself sincerely sympathize with you, and all your respectable family, in your present distress, which must be of the bitterest kind, because proceeding from a cause which no time can remove. No arguments shall be wanting, on my part, that can alleviate so severe a misfortune; or that may comfort you under a circumstance that must be of all others most afflicting to a parent's mind. The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison of this. And it is the more to be lamented because there is reason to suppose, as my dear Charlotte informs me, that this licentiousness of behavior in your daughter has proceeded from a faulty degree of indulgence; though at the same time, for the consolation of yourself and Mrs. Bennet, I am inclined to think that her own disposition must be naturally bad, or she could not be guilty of such an enormity at so early an age. Howsoever that may be, you are grievously to be pitied, in which opinion I am not only joined by Mrs. Collins, but likewise by Lady Catherine and her daughter, to whom I have related the affair. They agree with me in apprehending that this false step in one daughter will be injurious to the fortunes of all the others; for who, as Lady Catherine herself condescendingly says, will connect themselves with such a family? And this consideration leads me, moreover, to reflect with augmented satisfaction on a certain event of last November; for had it been otherwise, I must have been involved in all your sorrows and disgrace. Let me advise you, then, my dear sir, to console yourself as much as possible, to throw off your unworthy child from your affection forever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own heinous offense.

I am, dear sir, etc., etc.

A WELL-MATCHED SISTER AND BROTHER

From ‹Northanger Abbey›

«My dearest Catherine, have you settled what to wear on your head to-night? I am determined, at all events, to be dressed exactly like you. The men take notice of *that* sometimes, you know.»

«But it does not signify if they do,» said Catherine, very innocently.

«Signify! oh, heavens! I make it a rule never to mind what they say. They are very often amazingly impertinent, if you do not treat them with spirit, and make them keep their distance.»

«Are they? Well I never observed *that*. They always behave very well to me.»

«Oh! they give themselves such airs. They are the most conceited creatures in the world, and think themselves of so much importance! By the by, though I have thought of it a hundred times, I have always forgot to ask you what is your favorite complexion in a man. Do you like them best dark or fair?»

«I hardly know. I never much thought about it. Something between both, I think—brown: not fair, and not very dark.»

«Very well, Catherine. That is exactly he. I have not forgot your description of Mr. Tilney: ‹a brown skin, with dark eyes, and rather dark hair.› Well, my taste is different. I prefer light eyes; and as to complexion, do you know, I like a sallow better than any other. You must not betray me, if you should ever meet with one of your acquaintance answering that description.»

«Betray you! What do you mean?»

«Nay, do not distress me. I believe I have said too much. Let us drop the subject.»

Catherine, in some amazement, complied; and after remaining a few moments silent, was on the point of reverting to what interested her at that time rather more than anything else in the world, Laurentina's skeleton, when her friend prevented her by saying, «For Heaven's sake! let us move away from this end of the room. Do you know, there are two odious young men who have been staring at me this half-hour. They really put me quite out of countenance. Let us go and look at the arrivals. They will hardly follow us there.»

Away they walked to the book; and while Isabella examined the names, it was Catherine's employment to watch the proceedings of these alarming young men.

"They are not coming this way, are they? I hope they are not so impertinent as to follow us. Pray let me know if they are coming. I am determined I will not look up."

In a few moments Catherine, with unaffected pleasure, assured her that she need not be longer uneasy, as the gentlemen had just left the Pump-room.

"And which way are they gone?" said Isabella, turning hastily round. "One was a very good-looking young man."

"They went towards the churchyard."

"Well, I am amazingly glad I have got rid of them! And now what say you to going to Edgar's Buildings with me, and looking at my new hat? You said you should like to see it."

Catherine readily agreed. "Only," she added, "perhaps we may overtake the two young men."

"Oh! never mind that. If we make haste, we shall pass by them presently, and I am dying to show you my hat."

"But if we only wait a few minutes, there will be no danger of our seeing them at all."

"I shall not pay them any such compliment, I assure you. I have no notion of treating men with such respect. *That* is the way to spoil them."

Catherine had nothing to oppose against such reasoning; and therefore, to show the independence of Miss Thorpe, and her resolution of humbling the sex, they set off immediately, as fast as they could walk, in pursuit of the two young men.

Half a minute conducted them through the Pump-yard to the archway, opposite Union Passage; but here they were stopped. Everybody acquainted with Bath may remember the difficulties of crossing Cheap Street at this point; it is indeed a street of so impertinent a nature, so unfortunately connected with the great London and Oxford roads, and the principal inn of the city, that a day never passes in which parties of ladies, however important their business, whether in quest of pastry, millinery, or even (as in the present case) of young men, are not detained on one side or other by carriages, horsemen, or carts. This evil had been felt and lamented, at least three times a day, by Isabella since her residence in Bath: and she was now fated to feel and lament it once more; for at the very moment of coming opposite to

Union Passage, and within view of the two gentlemen who were proceeding through the crowds and treading the gutters of that interesting alley, they were prevented crossing by the approach of a gig, driven along on bad pavements by a most knowing-looking coachman, with all the vehemence that could most fitly endanger the lives of himself, his companion, and his horse.

«Oh, these odious gigs!» said Isabella, looking up, «how I detest them!» But this detestation, though so just, was of short duration, for she looked again, and exclaimed, «Delightful! Mr. Morland and my brother!»

«Good Heaven! 'tis James!» was uttered at the same moment by Catherine; and on catching the young men's eyes, the horse was immediately checked with a violence which almost threw him on his haunches; and the servant having now scampered up, the gentlemen jumped out, and the equipage was delivered to his care.

Catherine, by whom this meeting was wholly unexpected, received her brother with the liveliest pleasure; and he, being of a very amiable disposition, and sincerely attached to her, gave every proof on his side of equal satisfaction, which he could have leisure to do, while the bright eyes of Miss Thorpe were incessantly challenging his notice; and to her his devoirs were speedily paid, with a mixture of joy and embarrassment which might have informed Catherine, had she been more expert in the development of other people's feelings, and less simply engrossed by her own, that her brother thought her friend quite as pretty as she could do herself.

John Thorpe, who in the mean time had been giving orders about the horse, soon joined them, and from him she directly received the amends which were her due; for while he slightly and carelessly touched the hand of Isabella, on her he bestowed a whole scrape and half a short bow. He was a stout young man, of middling height, who, with a plain face and ungraceful form, seemed fearful of being too handsome unless he wore the dress of a groom, and too much like a gentleman unless he were easy where he ought to be civil, and impudent where he might be allowed to be easy. He took out his watch:—«How long do you think we have been running in from Tetbury, Miss Morland?»

«I do not know the distance.» Her brother told her that it was twenty-three miles.

"*Three*-and-twenty!" cried Thorpe; "five-and-twenty if it is an inch." Morland remonstrated, pleaded the authority of road-books, innkeepers, and milestones: but his friend disregarded them all; he had a surer test of distance. "I know it must be five-and-twenty," said he, "by the time we have been doing it." "It is now half after one; we drove out of the inn-yard at Tetbury as the town-clock struck eleven; and I defy any man in England to make my horse go less than ten miles an hour in harness; that makes it exactly twenty-five."

"You have lost an hour," said Morland: "it was only ten o'clock when we came from Tetbury."

"Ten o'clock! it was eleven, upon my soul! I counted every stroke. This brother of yours would persuade me out of my senses, Miss Morland. Do but look at my horse: did you ever see an animal so made for speed in your life?" (The servant had just mounted the carriage and was driving off.) "Such true blood! Three hours and a half, indeed, coming only three-and-twenty miles! Look at that creature, and suppose it possible, if you can!"

"He *does* look very hot, to be sure."

"Hot! he had not turned a hair till we came to Walcot Church: but look at his forehand; look at his loins; only see how he moves: that horse *cannot* go less than ten miles an hour; tie his legs, and he will get on. What do you think of my gig, Miss Morland? A neat one, is it not? Well hung; town built: I have not had it a month. It was built for a Christ Church man, a friend of mine, a very good sort of fellow; he ran it a few weeks, till, I believe, it was convenient to have done with it. I happened just then to be looking out for some light thing of the kind, though I had pretty well determined on a curricle too; but I chanced to meet him on Magdalen Bridge, as he was driving into Oxford, last term: 'Ah, Thorpe,' said he, 'do you happen to want such a little thing as this? It is a capital one of the kind, but I am cursed tired of it.' 'Oh! d——,' said I, 'I am your man; what do you ask?' And how much do you think he did, Miss Morland?"

"I am sure I cannot guess at all."

"Curricle-hung, you see; seat, trunk, sword-case, splashing-board, lamps, silver molding, all, you see, complete; the ironwork as good as new, or better. He asked fifty guineas: I closed with him directly, threw down the money, and the carriage was mine."

"And I am sure," said Catherine, "I know so little of such things, that I cannot judge whether it was cheap or dear."

"Neither one nor t'other; I might have got it for less, I dare say; but I hate haggling, and poor Freeman wanted cash."

"That was very good-natured of you," said Catherine, quite pleased.

"Oh! d—— it, when one has the means of doing a kind thing by a friend, I hate to be pitiful."

An inquiry now took place into the intended movements of the young ladies; and on finding whither they were going, it was decided that the gentlemen should accompany them to Edgar's Buildings, and pay their respects to Mrs. Thorpe. James and Isabella led the way; and so well satisfied was the latter with her lot, so contentedly was she endeavoring to insure a pleasant walk to him who brought the double recommendation of being her brother's friend and her friend's brother, so pure and uncoquettish were her feelings, that though they overtook and passed the two offending young men in Milsom Street, she was so far from seeking to attract their notice that she looked back at them only three times.

John Thorpe kept of course with Catherine, and after a few minutes' silence renewed the conversation about his gig:—"You will find, however, Miss Morland, it would be reckoned a cheap thing by some people, for I might have sold it for ten guineas more the next day; Jackson of Oriel bid me sixty at once; Morland was with me at the time."

"Yes," said Morland, who overheard this; "but you forgot that your horse was included."

"My horse! oh, d—— it! I would not sell my horse for a hundred. Are you fond of an open carriage, Miss Morland?"

"Yes, very: I have hardly ever an opportunity of being in one; but I am particularly fond of it."

"I am glad of it: I will drive you out in mine every day."

"Thank you," said Catherine, in some distress, from a doubt of the propriety of accepting such an offer.

"I will drive you up Lansdown Hill to-morrow."

"Thank you; but will not your horse want rest?"

"Rest! he has only come three-and-twenty miles to-day; all nonsense: nothing ruins horses so much as rest; nothing knocks them up so soon. No, no: I shall exercise mine at the average of four hours every day while I am here."

"Shall you, indeed!" said Catherine, very seriously: "that will be forty miles a day."

"Forty! ay, fifty, for what I care. Well, I will drive you up Lansdown to-morrow; mind, I am engaged."

"How delightful that will be!" cried Isabella, turning round; "my dearest Catherine, I quite envy you; but I am afraid, brother, you will not have room for a third."

"A third, indeed! no, no; I did not come to Bath to drive my sisters about: that would be a good joke, faith! Morland must take care of you."

This brought on a dialogue of civilities between the other two; but Catherine heard neither the particulars nor the result. Her companion's discourse now sunk from its hitherto animated pitch to nothing more than a short, decisive sentence of praise or condemnation on the face of every women they met; and Catherine, after listening and agreeing as long as she could, with all the civility and deference of the youthful female mind, fearful of hazarding an opinion of its own in opposition to that of a self-assured man, especially where the beauty of her own sex is concerned, ventured at length to vary the subject by a question which had been long uppermost in her thoughts. It was, "Have you ever read 'Udolpho,' Mr. Thorpe?"

"'Udolpho'! O Lord! not I: I never read novels; I have something else to do."

Catherine, humbled and ashamed, was going to apologize for her question; but he prevented her by saying, "Novels are all so full of nonsense and stuff! there has not been a tolerable decent one come out since 'Tom Jones,' except the 'Monk'; I read that t'other day: but as for all the others, they are the stupidest things in creation."

"I think you must like 'Udolpho,' if you were to read it: it is so very interesting."

"Not I, faith! No, if I read any, it shall be Mrs. Radcliffe's; her novels are amusing enough: they are worth reading; some fun and nature in *them.*"

"'Udolpho' was written by Mrs. Radcliffe," said Catherine, with some hesitation, from the fear of mortifying him.

"No, sure; was it? Ay, I remember, so it was; I was thinking of that other stupid book, written by that woman they made such a fuss about; she who married the French emigrant."

"I suppose you mean 'Camilla'?"

«Yes, that's the book: such unnatural stuff! An old man playing at see-saw: I took up the first volume once, and looked it over, but I soon found it would not do; indeed, I guessed what sort of stuff it must be before I saw it; as soon as I heard she had married an emigrant, I was sure I should never be able to get through it.»

«I have never read it.»

«You have no loss, I assure you; it is the horridest nonsense you can imagine: there is nothing in the world in it but an old man's playing at see-saw and learning Latin; upon my soul, there is not.»

This critique, the justness of which was unfortunately lost on poor Catherine, brought them to the door of Mrs. Thorpe's lodgings, and the feelings of the discerning and unprejudiced reader of ‹Camilla› gave way to the feelings of the dutiful and affectionate son, as they met Mrs. Thorpe, who had descried them from above, in the passage. «Ah, mother, how do you do?» said he, giving her a hearty shake of the hand; «where did you get that quiz of a hat? it makes you look like an old witch. Here is Morland and I come to stay a few days with you; so you must look out for a couple of good beds somewhere near.» And this address seemed to satisfy all the fondest wishes of the mother's heart, for she received him with the most delighted and exulting affection. On his two younger sisters he then bestowed an equal portion of his fraternal tenderness, for he asked each of them how they did, and observed that they both looked very ugly.

FAMILY DOCTORS

From ‹Emma›

While they were thus comfortably occupied, Mr. Woodhouse was enjoying a full flow of happy regrets and tearful affection with his daughter.

«My poor, dear Isabella,» said he, fondly taking her hand, and interrupting for a few moments her busy labors for some one of her five children, «how long it is, how terribly long since you were here! And how tired you must be after your journey! You must go to bed early, my dear,—and I recommend a little gruel to you before you go. You and I will have a nice basin of gruel together. My dear Emma, suppose we all have a little gruel."

Emma could not suppose any such thing, knowing as she did that both the Mr. Knightleys were as unpersuadable on that article as herself, and two basins only were ordered. After a little more discourse in praise of gruel, with some wondering at its not being taken every evening by everybody, he proceeded to say, with an air of grave reflection:—

"It was an awkward business, my dear, your spending the autumn at South End instead of coming here. I never had much opinion of the sea air."

"Mr. Wingfield most strenuously recommended it, sir, or we should not have gone. He recommended it for all the children, but particularly for the weakness in little Bella's throat,—both sea air and bathing."

"Ah, my dear, but Perry had many doubts about the sea doing her any good; and as to myself, I have been long perfectly convinced, though perhaps I never told you so before, that the sea is very rarely of use to anybody. I am sure it almost killed me once."

"Come, come," cried Emma, feeling this to be an unsafe subject, "I must beg you not to talk of the sea. It makes me envious and miserable; I who have never seen it! South End is prohibited, if you please. My dear Isabella, I have not heard you make one inquiry after Mr. Perry yet; and he never forgets you."

"Oh, good Mr. Perry, how is he, sir?"

"Why, pretty well; but not quite well. Poor Perry is bilious, and he has not time to take care of himself; he tells me he has not time to take care of himself—which is very sad—but he is always wanted all round the country. I suppose there is not a man in such practice anywhere. But then, there is not so clever a man anywhere."

"And Mrs. Perry and the children, how are they? Do the children grow? I have a great regard for Mr. Perry. I hope he will be calling soon. He will be so pleased to see my little ones."

"I hope he will be here to-morrow, for I have a question or two to ask him about myself of some consequence. And, my dear, whenever he comes, you had better let him look at little Bella's throat."

"Oh, my dear sir, her throat is so much better that I have hardly any uneasiness about it. Either bathing has been of the greatest service to her, or else it is to be attributed to an excellent embrocation of Mr. Wingfield's, which we have been applying at times ever since August."

"It is not very likely, my dear, that bathing should have been of use to her; and if I had known you were wanting an embrocation, I would have spoken to—"

"You seem to me to have forgotten Mrs. and Miss Bates," said Emma: "I have not heard one inquiry after them."

"Oh, the good Bateses—I am quite ashamed of myself; but you mention them in most of your letters. I hope they are quite well. Good old Mrs. Bates. I will call upon her to-morrow, and take my children. They are always so pleased to see my children. And that excellent Miss Bates!—such thorough worthy people! How are they, sir?"

"Why, pretty well, my dear, upon the whole. But poor Mrs. Bates had a bad cold about a month ago."

"How sorry I am! but colds were never so prevalent as they have been this autumn. Mr. Wingfield told me that he had never known them more general or heavy, except when it has been quite an influenza."

"That has been a good deal the case, my dear, but not to the degree you mention. Perry says that colds have been very general, but not so heavy as he has very often known them in November. Perry does not call it altogether a sickly season."

"No, I do not know that Mr. Wingfield considers it *very* sickly, except—"

"Ah, my poor, dear child, the truth is, that in London it is always a sickly season. Nobody is healthy in London, nobody can be. It is a dreadful thing to have you forced to live there;—so far off!—and the air so bad!"

"No, indeed, *we* are not at all in a bad air. Our part of London is so very superior to most others. You must not confound us with London in general, my dear sir. The neighborhood of Brunswick Square is very different from almost all the rest. We are so very airy! I should be unwilling, I own, to live in any other part of the town; there is hardly any other that I could be satisfied to have my children in: but *we* are so remarkably airy! Mr. Wingfield thinks the vicinity of Brunswick Square decidedly the most favorable as to air."

"Ah, my dear, it is not like Hartfield. You make the best of it—but after you have been a week at Hartfield, you are all of you different creatures; you do not look like the same. Now, I cannot say that I think you are any of you looking well at present."

"I am sorry to hear you say so, sir; but I assure you, excepting those little nervous headaches and palpitations which I am never entirely free from anywhere, I am quite well myself; and if the children were rather pale before they went to bed, it was only because they were a little more tired than usual from their journey and the happiness of coming. I hope you will think better of their looks to-morrow; for I assure you Mr. Wingfield told me that he did not believe he had ever sent us off, altogether, in such good case. I trust at least that you do not think Mr. Knightley looking ill," turning her eyes with affectionate anxiety toward her husband.

"Middling, my dear; I cannot compliment you. I think Mr. John Knightley very far from looking well."

"What is the matter, sir? Did you speak to me?" cried Mr. John Knightley, hearing his own name.

"I am sorry to find, my love, that my father does not think you looking well; but I hope it is only from being a little fatigued. I could have wished, however, as you know, that you had seen Mr. Wingfield before you left home."

"My dear Isabella," exclaimed he hastily, "pray do not concern yourself about my looks. Be satisfied with doctoring and coddling yourself and the children, and let me look as I choose."

"I did not thoroughly understand what you were telling your brother," cried Emma, "about your friend Mr. Graham's intending to have a bailiff from Scotland to look after his new estate. But will it answer? Will not the old prejudice be too strong?"

And she talked in this way so long and successfully that, when forced to give her attention again to her father and sister, she had nothing worse to hear than Isabella's kind inquiry after Jane Fairfax; and Jane Fairfax, though no great favorite with her in general, she was at that moment very happy to assist in praising.

"That sweet, amiable Jane Fairfax!" said Mrs. John Knightley. "It is so long since I have seen her, except now and then for a moment accidentally in town. What happiness it must be to her good old grandmother and excellent aunt when she comes to visit them! I always regret excessively, on dear Emma's account, that she cannot be more at Highbury; but now their daughter is married I suppose Colonel and Mrs. Campbell will not be able to part with her at all. She would be such a delightful companion for Emma."

Mr. Woodhouse agreed to it all, but added:—

"Our little friend Harriet Smith, however, is just such another pretty kind of young person. You will like Harriet. Emma could not have a better companion than Harriet."

"I am most happy to hear it; but only Jane Fairfax one knows to be so very accomplished and superior, and exactly Emma's age."

This topic was discussed very happily, and others succeeded of similar moment, and passed away with similar harmony; but the evening did not close without a little return of agitation. The gruel came and supplied a great deal to be said—much praise and many comments—undoubting decision of its wholesomeness for every constitution, and pretty severe philippics upon the many houses where it was never met with tolerably; but unfortunately, among the failures which the daughter had to instance, the most recent and therefore most prominent was in her own cook at South End, a young woman hired for the time, who never had been able to understand what she meant by a basin of nice smooth gruel, thin, but not too thin. Often as she had wished for and ordered it, she had never been able to get anything tolerable. Here was a dangerous opening.

"Ah," said Mr. Woodhouse, shaking his head, and fixing his eyes on her with tender concern. The ejaculation in Emma's ear expressed, "Ah, there is no end of the sad consequences of your going to South End. It does not bear talking of." And for a little while she hoped he would not talk of it, and that a silent rumination might suffice to restore him to the relish of his own smooth gruel. After an interval of some minutes, however, he began with—

"I shall always be very sorry that you went to the sea this autumn, instead of coming here."

"But why should you be sorry, sir? I assure you it did the children a great deal of good."

"And moreover, if you must go to the sea, it had better not have been to South End. South End is an unhealthy place. Perry was surprised to hear you had fixed upon South End."

«I know there is such an idea with many people, but indeed it is quite a mistake, sir. We all had our health perfectly well there, never found the least inconvenience from the mud, and Mr. Wingfield says it is entirely a mistake to suppose the place unhealthy; and I am sure he may be depended on, for he thoroughly understands the nature of the air, and his own brother and family have been there repeatedly.»

«You should have gone to Cromer, my dear, if you went anywhere. Perry was a week at Cromer once, and he holds it to be the best of all the sea-bathing places. A fine open sea, he says, and very pure air. And by what I understand, you might have had lodgings there quite away from the sea—a quarter of a mile off—very comfortable. You should have consulted Perry.»

«But my dear sir, the difference of the journey: only consider how great it would have been. A hundred miles, perhaps, instead of forty.»

«Ah, my dear, as Perry says, where health is at stake, nothing else should be considered; and if one is to travel, there is not much to choose between forty miles and a hundred. Better not move at all, better stay in London altogether than travel forty miles to get into a worse air. This is just what Perry said. It seemed to him a very ill-judged measure.»

Emma's attempts to stop her father had been vain; and when he had reached such a point as this, she could not wonder at her brother-in-law's breaking out.

«Mr. Perry,» said he, in a voice of very strong displeasure, «would do as well to keep his opinion till it is asked for. Why does he make it any business of his to wonder at what I do?—at my taking my family to one part of the coast or another? I may be allowed, I hope, the use of my judgment as well as Mr. Perry. I want his directions no more than his drugs.» He paused, and growing cooler in a moment, added, with only sarcastic dryness, «If Mr. Perry can tell me how to convey a wife and five children a distance of a hundred and thirty miles with no greater expense or inconvenience than a distance of forty, I should be as willing to prefer Cromer to South End as he could himself.»

«True, true,» cried Mr. Knightley, with most ready interposition, «very true. That's a consideration, indeed. But, John, as to what I was telling you of my idea of moving the path to Langham, of turning it more to the right that it may not cut through the home meadows, I cannot conceive any difficulty. I should not attempt it, if it were to be the means of inconvenience to the Highbury people, but if you call to mind exactly the present light of the path— The only way of proving it, however, will be to turn to our maps. I shall see you at the Abbey to-morrow morning, I hope, and then we will look them over, and you shall give me your opinion.»

Mr. Woodhouse was rather agitated by such harsh reflections on his friend Perry, to whom he had in fact, though unconsciously, been attributing many of his own feelings and expressions; but the soothing attentions of his daughters gradually removed the present evil, and the immediate alertness of one brother, and better recollections of the other, prevented any renewal of it.

FAMILY TRAINING

From ‹Mansfield Park›

As her [Fanny Price's] appearance and spirits improved, Sir Thomas and Mrs. Norris thought with greater satisfaction of their benevolent plan; and it was pretty soon decided between them, that though far from clever, she showed a tractable disposition, and seemed likely to give them little trouble. A mean opinion of her abilities was not confined to *them.* Fanny could read, work, and write, but she had been taught nothing more; and as her cousins found her ignorant of many things with which they had been long familiar, they thought her prodigiously stupid, and for the first two or three weeks were continually bringing some fresh report of it into the drawing-room. «Dear mamma, only think, my cousin cannot put the map of Europe together»—or «my cousin cannot tell the principal rivers in Russia»—or «she never heard of Asia Minor»—or «she does not know the difference between water-colors and crayons! How strange! Did you ever hear anything so stupid?»

«My dear,» their aunt would reply, «it is very bad, but you must not expect everybody to be as quick at learning as yourself.»

«But, aunt, she is really so very ignorant! Do you know, we asked her last night which way she would go to get to Ireland; and she said she should cross to the Isle of Wight. She thinks of nothing but the Isle of Wight, and she calls it *the Island*, as if there were no other island in the world. I am sure I should have been ashamed of myself, if I had not known better long before I was so old as she is. I cannot remember the time when I did not know a great deal that she has not the least notion of yet. How long ago it is, aunt, since we used to repeat the chronological order of the kings of England, with the dates of their accession, and most of the principal events of their reigns!"

"Yes," added the other; "and of the Roman emperors as low as Severus; besides a great deal of the heathen mythology, and all the metals, semi-metals, planets, and distinguished philosophers."

"Very true, indeed, my dears, but you are blessed with wonderful memories, and your poor cousin has probably none at all. There is a vast deal of difference in memories, as well as in everything else; and therefore you must make allowance for your cousin, and pity her deficiency. And remember that if you are ever so forward and clever yourselves, you should always be modest, for, much as you know already, there is a great deal more for you to learn."

"Yes, I know there is, till I am seventeen. But I must tell you another thing of Fanny, so odd and so stupid. Do you know, she says she does not want to learn either music or drawing?"

"To be sure, my dear, that is very stupid indeed, and shows a great want of genius and emulation. But, all things considered, I do not know whether it is not as well that it should be so: for though you know (owing to me) your papa and mamma are so good as to bring her up with you, it is not at all necessary that she should be as accomplished as you are; on the contrary, it is much more desirable that there should be a difference."

Such were the counsels by which Mrs. Norris assisted to form her nieces' minds; and it is not very wonderful that, with all their promising talents and early information, they should be entirely deficient in the less common acquirements of self-knowledge, generosity, and humility. In everything but disposition, they were admirably taught. Sir Thomas did not know what was wanting, because, though a truly anxious father, he was not outwardly affectionate, and the reserve of his manner repressed all the flow of their spirits before him.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS

From ‹Mansfield Park›

Fanny looked on and listened, not unamused to observe the selfishness which, more or less disguised, seemed to govern them all, and wondering how it would end. . . .

Three of the characters were now cast, besides Mr. Rushworth, who was always answered for by Maria as willing to do anything; when Julia, meaning, like her sister, to be Agatha, began to be scrupulous on Miss Crawford's account.

« This is not behaving well by the absent,» said she. « Here are not women enough. Amelia and Agatha may do for Maria and me, but here is nothing for your sister, Mr. Crawford.»

Mr. Crawford desired *that* might not be thought of; he was very sure his sister had no wish of acting but as she might be useful, and that she would not allow herself to be considered in the present case. But this was immediately opposed by Tom Bertram, who asserted the part of Amelia to be in every respect the property of Miss Crawford, if she would accept it. « It falls as naturally as necessarily to her,» said he, « as Agatha does to one or other of my sisters. It can be no sacrifice on their side, for it is highly comic.»

A short silence followed. Each sister looked anxious; for each felt the best claim to Agatha, and was hoping to have it pressed on her by the rest. Henry Crawford, who meanwhile had taken up the play, and with seeming carelessness was turning over the first act, soon settled the business.

« I must entreat Miss *Julia* Bertram,» said he, « not to engage in the part of Agatha, or it will be the ruin of all my solemnity. You must not, indeed you must not [turning to her]. I could not stand your countenance dressed up in woe and paleness. The many laughs we have had together would infallibly come across me, and Frederick and his knapsack would be obliged to run away.»

Pleasantly, courteously, it was spoken; but the manner was lost in the matter to Julia's feelings. She saw a glance at Maria, which confirmed the injury to herself: it was a scheme, a trick; she was slighted, Maria was preferred; the smile of triumph which Maria was trying to suppress showed how well it was understood: and before Julia could command herself enough to speak, her brother gave his weight against her too, by saying, "Oh yes! Maria must be Agatha. Maria will be the best Agatha. Though Julia fancies she prefers tragedy, I would not trust her in it. There is nothing of tragedy about her. She has not the look of it. Her features are not tragic features, and she walks too quick, and speaks too quick, and would not keep her countenance. She had better do the old countrywoman — the Cottager's wife; you had, indeed, Julia. Cottager's wife is a very pretty part, I assure you. The old lady relieves the high-flown benevolence of her husband with a good deal of spirit. You shall be the Cottager's wife."

"Cottager's wife!" cried Mr. Yates. "What are you talking of? The most trivial, paltry, insignificant part; the merest commonplace; not a tolerable speech in the whole. Your sister do that! It is an insult to propose it. At Ecclesford the governess was to have done it. We all agreed that it could not be offered to anybody else. A little more justice, Mr. Manager, if you please. You do not deserve the office if you cannot appreciate the talents of your company a little better."

"Why, as to *that*, my good friends, till I and my company have really acted, there must be some guesswork; but I mean no disparagement to Julia. We cannot have two Agathas, and we must have one Cottager's wife; and I am sure I set her the example of moderation myself in being satisfied with the old Butler. If the part is trifling she will have more credit in making something of it: and if she is so desperately bent against everything humorous, let her take Cottager's speeches instead of Cottager's wife's, and so change the parts all through; *he* is solemn and pathetic enough, I am sure. It could make no difference in the play; and as for Cottager himself, when he has got his wife's speeches, *I* would undertake him with all my heart."

"With all your partiality for Cottager's wife," said Henry Crawford, "it will be impossible to make anything of it fit for your sister, and we must not suffer her good nature to be imposed on. We must not *allow* her to accept the part. She must not be left to her own complaisance. Her talents will be wanted in Amelia. Amelia is a character more difficult to be well represented than even Agatha. I consider Amelia as the most difficult character in the whole piece. It requires great powers, great nicety, to give her playfulness and simplicity without extravagance. I have seen good actresses fail in the part. Simplicity, indeed, is beyond the reach of almost every actress by profession. It requires a delicacy of feeling which they have not. It requires a gentlewoman — a Julia Bertram. You *will* undertake it, I hope?" turning to her with a look of anxious entreaty, which softened her a little; but while she hesitated what to say, her brother again interposed with Miss Crawford's better claim.

"No, no, Julia must not be Amelia. It is not at all the part for her. She would not like it. She would not do well. She is too tall and robust. Amelia should be a small, light, girlish, skipping figure. It is fit for Miss Crawford, and Miss Crawford only. She looks the part, and I am persuaded will do it admirably."

Without attending to this, Henry Crawford continued his supplication. "You must oblige us," said he, "indeed you must. When you have studied the character I am sure you will feel it suits you. Tragedy may be your choice, but it will certainly appear that comedy chooses *you*. You will have to visit me in prison with a basket of provisions; you will not refuse to visit me in prison? I think I see you coming in with your basket."

The influence of his voice was felt. Julia wavered; but was he only trying to soothe and pacify her, and make her overlook the previous affront? She distrusted him. The slight had been most determined. He was, perhaps, but at treacherous play with her. She looked suspiciously at her sister; Maria's countenance was to decide it; if she were vexed and alarmed — but Maria looked all serenity and satisfaction, and Julia well knew that on this ground Maria could not be happy but at her expense. With hasty indignation, therefore, and a tremulous voice, she said to him, "You do not seem afraid of not keeping your countenance when I come in with a basket of provisions — though one might have supposed — but it is only as Agatha that I was to be so overpowering!" She stopped, Henry Crawford looked rather foolish, and as if he did not know what to say. Tom Bertram began again: —

"Miss Crawford must be Amelia. She will be an excellent Amelia."

"Do not be afraid of *my* wanting the character," cried Julia, with angry quickness: "I am *not* to be Agatha, and I am sure I will do nothing else; and as to Amelia, it is of all parts in the world the most disgusting to me. I quite detest her. An odious little, pert, unnatural, impudent girl. I have always protested against comedy, and this is comedy in its worst form." And so saying, she walked hastily out of the room, leaving awkward feelings to more than one, but exciting small compassion in any except Fanny, who had been a quiet auditor of the whole, and who could not think of her as under the agitations of *jealousy* without great pity. . . .

The inattention of the two brothers and the aunt to Julia's discomposure, and their blindness to its true cause, must be imputed to the fullness of their own minds. They were totally preoccupied. Tom was engrossed by the concerns of his theatre, and saw nothing that did not immediately relate to it. Edmund, between his theatrical and his real part—between Miss Crawford's claims and his own conduct—between love and consistency, was equally unobservant: and Mrs. Norris was too busy in contriving and directing the general little matters of the company, superintending their various dresses with economical expedients, for which nobody thanked her, and saving, with delighted integrity, half-a-crown here and there to the absent Sir Thomas, to have leisure for watching the behavior, or guarding the happiness, of his daughters.

FRUITLESS REGRETS AND APPLES OF SODOM

From ‹Mansfield Park›

These were the circumstances and the hopes which gradually brought their alleviation to Sir Thomas, deadening his sense of what was lost, and in part reconciling him to himself; though the anguish arising from the conviction of his own errors in the education of his daughters was never to be entirely done away.

Too late he became aware how unfavorable to the character of any young people must be the totally opposite treatment which Maria and Julia had been always experiencing at home, where the excessive indulgence and flattery of their aunt had been continually contrasted with his own severity. He saw how ill he had judged, in expecting to counteract what was wrong in Mrs. Norris by its reverse in himself, clearly saw that he had but increased the evil, by teaching them to repress their spirits in his presence so as to make their real disposition unknown to him, and sending them for all their indulgences to a person who had been able to attach them only by the blindness of her affection and the excess of her praise.

Here had been grievous mismanagement; but, bad as it was, he gradually grew to feel that it had not been the most direful mistake in his plan of education. Something must have been wanting *within*, or time would have worn away much of its ill effect. He feared that principle, active principle, had been wanting; that they had never been properly taught to govern their inclinations and tempers, by that sense of duty which can alone suffice. They had been instructed theoretically in their religion, but never required to bring it into daily practice. To be distinguished for elegance and accomplishments — the authorized object of their youth — could have had no useful influence that way, no moral effect on the mind. He had meant them to be good, but his cares had been directed to the understanding and manners, not the disposition; and of the necessity of self-denial and humility, he feared they had never heard from any lips that could profit them.

Bitterly did he deplore a deficiency which now he could scarcely comprehend to have been possible. Wretchedly did he feel, that with all the cost and care of an anxious and expensive education, he had brought up his daughters without their understanding their first duties, or his being acquainted with their character and temper.

The high spirit and strong passions of Mrs. Rushworth especially were made known to him only in their sad result. She was not to be prevailed on to leave Mr. Crawford. She hoped to marry him, and they continued together till she was obliged to be convinced that such hope was vain, and till the disappointment and wretchedness arising from the conviction rendered her temper so bad, and her feelings for him so like hatred, as to make them for a while each other's punishment, and then induce a voluntary separation.

She had lived with him to be reproached as the ruin of all his happiness in Fanny, and carried away no better consolation in leaving him, than that she *had* divided them. What can exceed the misery of such a mind in such a situation!

Mr. Rushworth had no difficulty in procuring a divorce; and so ended a marriage contracted under such circumstances as to make any better end the effect of good luck, not to be reckoned on. She had despised him, and loved another—and he had been very much aware that it was so. The indignities of stupidity, and the disappointments of selfish passion, can excite little pity. His punishment followed his conduct, as did a deeper punishment the deeper guilt of his wife. *He* was released from the engagement, to be mortified and unhappy till some other pretty girl could attract him into matrimony again, and he might set forward on a second, and it is to be hoped more prosperous trial of the state—if duped, to be duped at least with good humor and good luck; while *she* must withdraw with infinitely stronger feelings, to a retirement and reproach which could allow no second spring of hope or character.

Where she could be placed, became a subject of most melancholy and momentous consultation. Mrs. Norris, whose attachment seemed to augment with the demerits of her niece, would have had her received at home and countenanced by them all. Sir Thomas would not hear of it; and Mrs. Norris's anger against Fanny was so much the greater, from considering *her* residence there as the motive. She persisted in placing his scruples to *her* account, though Sir Thomas very solemnly assured her that had there been no young woman in question, had there been no young person of either sex belonging to him, to be endangered by the society or hurt by the character of Mrs. Rushworth, he would never have offered so great an insult to the neighborhood as to expect it to notice her. As a daughter—he hoped a penitent one—she should be protected by him, and secured in every comfort and supported by every encouragement to do right which their relative situations admitted; but farther than *that* he would not go. Maria had destroyed her own character; and he would not, by a vain attempt to restore what never could be restored, be affording his sanction to vice, or, in seeking to lessen its disgrace, be anywise accessory to introducing such misery in another man's family as he had known himself. . . .

Henry Crawford, ruined by early independence and bad domestic example, indulged in the freaks of a cold-blooded vanity a little too long. Once it had, by an opening undesigned and unmerited, led him into the way of happiness. Could he have been satisfied with the conquest of one amiable woman's affections, could he have found sufficient exultation in overcoming the reluctance, in working himself into the esteem and tenderness of Fanny Price, there would have been every probability of success and felicity for him. His affection had already done something. Her influence over him had already given him some influence over her. Would he have deserved more, there can be no doubt that more would have been obtained; especially when that marriage had taken place, which would have given him the assistance of her conscience in subduing her first inclination, and brought them very often together. Would he have persevered, and uprightly, Fanny must have been his reward—and a reward very voluntarily bestowed—within a reasonable period from Edmund's marrying Mary. Had he done as he intended, and as he knew he ought, by going down to Everingham after his return from Portsmouth, he might have been deciding his own happy destiny. But he was pressed to stay for Mrs. Fraser's party: his staying was made of flattering consequence, and he was to meet Mrs. Rushworth there. Curiosity and vanity were both engaged, and the temptation of immediate pleasure was too strong for a mind unused to make any sacrifice to right; he resolved to defer his Norfolk journey, resolved that writing should answer the purpose of it, or that its purpose was unimportant—and staid. He saw Mrs. Rushworth, was received by her with a coldness which ought to have been repulsive, and have established apparent indifference between them for ever: but he was mortified, he could not bear to be thrown off by the woman whose smiles had been so wholly at his command; he must exert himself to subdue so proud a display of resentment: it was anger on Fanny's account; he must get the better of it, and make Mrs. Rushworth Maria Bertram again in her treatment of himself.

In this spirit he began the attack; and by animated perseverance had soon re-established the sort of familiar intercourse—of gallantry—of flirtation—which bounded his views: but in triumphing over the discretion, which, though beginning in anger, might have saved them both, he had put himself in the power of feelings on her side more strong than he had supposed. She loved him; there was no withdrawing attentions avowedly dear to her. He was entangled by his own vanity, with as little excuse of love as possible, and without the smallest inconstancy of mind towards her cousin. To keep Fanny and the Bertrams from a knowledge of what was passing became his first object. Secrecy could not have been more desirable for Mrs. Rushworth's credit than he felt it for his own. When he returned from Richmond, he would have been glad to see Mrs. Rushworth no more. All that followed was the result of her imprudence; and he went off with her at last because he could not help it, regretting Fanny even at the moment, but regretting her infinitely more when all the bustle of the intrigue was over, and a very few months had taught him, by the force of contrast, to place a yet higher value on the sweetness of her temper, the purity of her mind, and the excellence of her principles.

That punishment, the public punishment of disgrace, should in a just measure attend *his* share of the offense, is, we know, not one of the barriers which society gives to virtue. In this world, the penalty is less equal than could be wished; but without presuming to look forward to a juster appointment hereafter, we may fairly consider a man of sense, like Henry Crawford, to be providing for himself no small portion of vexation and regret — vexation that must rise sometimes to self-reproach, and regret to wretchedness — in having so requited hospitality, so injured family peace, so forfeited his best, most estimable, and endeared acquaintance, and so lost the woman whom he had rationally as well as passionately loved.

AVERROES

(1126–1198)

AVERROËS (Abu 'l Walid Muhammad, ibn Achmad, ibn Muhammad, IBN RUSHD; or more in English, Abu 'l Walid Muhammed, the son of Achmet, the son of Muhammed, the son of Rushd) was born in 1126 at Cordova, Spain. His father and grandfather, the latter a celebrated jurist and canonist, had been judges in that city. He first studied theology and canon law, and later medicine and philosophy; thus, like Faust, covering the whole field of mediæval science. His life was cast in the most brilliant period of Western Muslim culture, in the splendor of that rationalism which preceded the great darkness of religious fanaticism. As a young man, he was introduced by Ibn Tufail (Abubacer), author of the famous 'Hayy al-Yukdhan,' a philosophical 'Robinson Crusoe,' to the enlightened Khalif Abu Ya'kub Yusuf (1163–84), as a fit expounder of the then popular philosophy of Aristotle. This position he filled with so much success as to become a favorite with the Prince, and finally his private physician. He likewise filled the important office of judge, first at Seville, later at Cordova.

He enjoyed even greater consideration under the next Khalif, Ya'kub al-Mansur, until the year 1195, when the jealousy of his rivals and the fanaticism of the Berbers led to his being accused of championing philosophy to the detriment of religion. Though Averroës always professed great respect for religion, and especially for Islâm, as a valuable popular substitute for science and philosophy, the charge could hardly be rebutted (as will be shown later), and the Amir of the Faithful could scarcely afford openly to favor a heretic. Averroës was accordingly deprived of his honors, and banished to Lacena, a Jewish settlement near Cordova—a fact which gives coloring to the belief that he was of Jewish descent. To satisfy his fanatical subjects for the moment, the Khalif published severe edicts not only against Averroës, but against all learned men and all learning as hostile to religion. For a time the poor philosopher could not appear in public without being mobbed; but after two years, a less fanatical party having come into power, the Prince revoked his edicts, and Averroës was restored to favor. This event he did not long survive. He died on 10th December 1198, in Marocco. Here too he was buried; but his body was afterward transported to Cordova, and laid in the tomb of his fathers. He left several sons, more than one of whom came to occupy important positions.

Averroës was the last great Muslim thinker, summing up and carrying to its conclusions the thought of four hundred years. The philosophy of Islâm, which flourished first in the East, in Basra and Bagdad (800–1100), and then in the West, Cordova, Toledo, etc. (1100–1200), was a mixture of Aristotelianism and Neo-Platonism, borrowed, under the earlier Persianizing Khalifs, from the Christian (mainly Nestorian) monks of Syria and Mesopotamia, being consequently a naturalistic system. In it God was acknowledged only as the supreme abstraction; while eternal matter, law, and impersonal intelligence played the principal part. It was necessarily irreconcilable with Muslim orthodoxy, in which a crudely conceived, intensely personal God is all in all. While Persian influence was potent, philosophy flourished, produced some really great scholars and thinkers, made considerable headway against Muslim fatalism and predestination, and seemed in a fair way to bring about a free and rational civilization, eminent in science and art. But no sooner did the fanatical or scholastic element get the upper hand than philosophy vanished, and with it all hope of a great Muslim civilization in the East. This change was marked by Al-Ghazzali, and his book ‘The Destruction of the Philosophers.’ He died in A. D. 1111, and then the works of Al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina, and the «Brothers of Purity,» wandered out to the far West, to seek for appreciation among the Muslim, Jews, and Christians of Spain. And for a brief time they found it there, and in the twelfth century found also eloquent expounders at the mosque-schools of Cordova, Toledo, Seville, and Saragossa. Of these the most famous were Ibn Baja, Ibn Tufail, and Ibn Rushd (Averroës).

During its progress, Muslim philosophy had gradually been eliminating the Neo-Platonic, mystic element, and returning to pure Aristotelianism. In Averroës, who professed to be merely a commentator on Aristotle, this tendency reached its climax; and though he still regarded the pseudo-Aristotelian works as genuine, and did not entirely escape their influence, he is by far the least mystic of Muslim thinkers. The two fundamental doctrines upon which he always insisted, and which long made his name famous, not to say notorious,—the eternity of matter and of the world (involving a denial of the doctrine of creation), and the oneness of the active intellect in all men (involving the mortality of the individual soul and the impossibility of resurrection and judgment), are both of Aristotelian origin. It was no wonder that he came into conflict with the orthodox Muslim; for in the warfare between Arab prophetism, with its shallow apologetic scholasticism, and Greek philosophy, with its earnest endeavor to find truth, and its belief in reason as the sole revealer thereof, he unhesitatingly took the side of the latter. He held that man is made to discover truth, and that the serious study of God and his works is the noblest form of worship.

However little one may agree with his chief tenets, there can be no doubt that he was the most enlightened man of the entire Middle Age, in Europe at least; and if his spirit and work had been continued, Western Islâm might have become a great permanent civilizing power. But here again, after a brief period of extraordinary philosophic brilliancy, fanaticism got the upper hand. With the death of Averroës the last hope of a beneficent Muslim civilization came to an end. Since then, Islâm has been a synonym for blind fanaticism and cruel bigotry. In many parts of the Muslim world, «philosopher» is a term of reproach, like «miscreant.»

But though Islâm rejected its philosopher, Averroës's work was by no means without its effect. It was through his commentaries on Aristotle that the thought of that greatest of ancient thinkers became known to the western world, both Jewish and Christian. Among the Jews, his writings soon acquired almost canonical authority. His system found expression in the works of the best known of Hebrew thinkers, Maimonides (1135–1204), «the second Moses»; works which, despite all orthodox opposition, dominated Jewish thought for nearly three hundred years, and made the Jews during that time the chief promoters of rationalism. When Muslim persecution forced a large number of Jews to leave Spain and settle in Southern France, the works of Averroës and Maimonides were translated into Hebrew, which thenceforth became the vehicle of Jewish thought; and thus Muslim Aristotelianism came into direct contact with Christianity.

Among the Christians, the works of Averroës, translated by Michael Scott, «wizard of dreaded fame,» Hermann the German, and others, acted at once like a mighty solvent. Heresy followed in their track, and shook the Church to her very foundations. Recognizing that her existence was at stake, she put forth all her power to crush the intruder. The Order of Preachers, initiated by St. Dominic of Calahorra (1170–1221), was founded; the Inquisition was legalized (about 1220). The writings of Aristotle and his Arab commentators were condemned to the flames (1209, 1215, 1231). Later, when all this proved unavailing, the best intellects in Christendom, such as Albertus Magnus (1193–1280), and Thomas Aquinas (1227–74), undertook to repel the new doctrine with its own weapons; that is, by submitting the thought of Aristotle and his Arab commentators to rational discussion. Thus was introduced the second or palmy period of Christian Scholasticism, whose chief industry, we may fairly say, was directed to the refutation of the two leading doctrines of Averroës. Aiming at this, Thomas Aquinas threw the whole dogmatic system of the Church into the forms of Aristotle, and thus produced that colossal system of theology which still prevails in the Roman Catholic world; witness the Encyclical *Æterni Patris* of Leo XIII., issued in 1879.

By the great thinkers of the thirteenth century, Averroës, though regarded as heretical and dangerous in religion, was looked up to as an able thinker, and the commentator *par excellence;* so much so that St. Thomas borrowed from him the very form of his own Commentaries, and Dante assigned him a distinguished place, beside Plato and Aristotle, in the limbo of ancient sages (‹Inferno,› iv. 143). But in the following century — mainly, no doubt, because he was chosen as the patron of certain strongly heretical movements, such as those instigated by the arch-rationalist Frederic II. — he came to be regarded as the precursor of Antichrist, if not that personage himself: being credited with the awful blasphemy of having spoken of the founders of the three current religions — Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad — as «the three impostors.» Whatever truth there may be in this, so much is certain, that infidelity, in the sense of an utter disbelief in Christianity as a revealed religion, or in any sense specially true, dates from the thirteenth century, and is due in large measure to the influence of Averroës. Yet he was a great favorite with the Franciscans, and for a time exercised a profound influence on the universities of Paris and Oxford, finding a strong admirer even in Roger Bacon. His thought was also a powerful element in the mysticism of Meister Eckhart and his followers; a mysticism which incurred the censure of the Church.

Thus both the leading forms of heresy which characterized the thirteenth century — naturalism with its tendency to magic, astrology, alchemy, etc., etc., and mysticism with its dreams of beatific visions, its self-torture and its lawlessness (see Görres, 'Die Christliche Mystik') — were due largely to Averroës. In spite of this, his commentaries on Aristotle maintained their credit, their influence being greatest in the fourteenth century, when his doctrines were openly professed. After the invention of printing, they appeared in numberless editions, — several times in connection with the text of Aristotle. As the age of the Renaissance and of Protestantism approached, they gradually lost their prestige. The chief humanists, like Petrarch, as well as the chief reformers, were bitterly hostile to them. Nevertheless, they contributed important elements to both movements.

Averroism survived longest in Northern Italy, especially in the University of Padua, where it was professed until the seventeenth century, and where, as a doctrine hostile to supernaturalism, it paved the way for the study of nature and the rise of modern science. Thus Averroës may fairly be said to have had a share in every movement toward freedom, wise and unwise, for the last seven hundred years. In truth, free thought in Europe owes more to him than to any other man except Abélard. His last declared follower was the impetuous Lucilio Vanini, who was burned for atheism at Toulouse in 1619.

The best work on Averroës is Renan's 'Averröes et l'Averroïsme' (fourth edition, Paris, 1893). This contains, on pages 58–79, a complete list both of his commentaries and his original writings.

THE AVESTA

(From about B. C. Sixth Century)

BY A. V. WILLIAMS JACKSON

Avesta, or Zend-Avesta, an interesting monument of antiquity, is the Bible of Zoroaster, the sacred book of ancient Iran, and holy scripture of the modern Parsis. The exact meaning of the name «Avesta» is not certain; it may perhaps signify «law,» «text,» or, more doubtfully, «wisdom,» «revelation.» The modern familiar designation of the book as Zend-Avesta is not strictly accurate; if used at all, it should rather be Avesta-Zend, like «Bible and Commentary,» as *zand* signifies «explanation,» «commentary,» and *Avesta u Zand* is employed in some Persian allusions to the Zoroastrian scriptures as a designation denoting the text of the Avesta accompanied by the Pahlavi version or interpretation.

The story of the recovery of the Avesta, or rather the discovery of the Avesta, by the enthusiastic young French scholar Anquetil du Perron, who was the first to open to the western world the ancient records of Zoroastrianism, reads almost like a romance. Du Perron's own account of his departure for India in 1754, of his experiences with the *dasturs* (or priests) during a seven years' residence among them, of his various difficulties and annoyances, setbacks and successes, is entertainingly presented in the introductory volume of his work ‹Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre› (3 Vols., Paris, 1771). This was the first translation of the ancient Persian books published in a European language. Its appearance formed one of those epochs which are marked by an addition to the literary, religious, or philosophical wealth of our time; a new contribution was added to the riches of the West from the treasures of the East. The field thus thrown open, although worked imperfectly at first, has yielded abundant harvests to the hands of later gleaners.

With the growth of our knowledge of the language of the sacred texts, we have now a clear idea also of the history of Zoroastrian literature and of the changes and chances through which with varying fortunes the scriptures have passed. The original Zoroastrian Avesta, according to tradition, was in itself a literature of vast dimensions. Pliny, in his ‹Natural History,› speaks of two million verses of Zoroaster; to which may be added the Persian assertion that the original copy of the scriptures was written upon twelve thousand parchments, with gold illuminated letters, and was deposited in the library at Persepolis. But what was the fate of this archetype? Parsi tradition has an answer. Alexander the Great — «the accursed

Iskander," as he is called—is responsible for its destruction. At the request of the beautiful Thais, as the story goes, he allowed the palace of Persepolis to be burned, and the precious treasure perished in the flames. Whatever view we may take of the different sides of this story, one thing cannot be denied: the invasion of Alexander and the subjugation of Iran was indirectly or directly the cause of a certain religious decadence which followed upon the disruption of the Persian Empire, and was answerable for the fact that a great part of the scriptures was forgotten or fell into disuse. Persian tradition lays at the doors of the Greeks the loss of another copy of the original ancient texts, but does not explain in what manner this happened; nor has it any account to give of copies of the prophet's works which Semitic writers say were translated into nearly a dozen different languages. One of these versions was perhaps Greek, for it is generally acknowledged that in the fourth century B. C. the philosopher Theopompus spent much time in giving in his own tongue the contents of the sacred Magian books.

Tradition is unanimous on one point at least: it is that the original Avesta comprised twenty-one *Nasks*, or books, a statement which there is no good reason to doubt. The same tradition which was acquainted with the general character of these Nasks professes also to tell exactly how many of them survived the inroad of Alexander; for although the sacred text itself was destroyed, its contents were lost only in part, the priests preserving large portions of the precious scriptures. These met with many vicissitudes in the five centuries that intervened between the conquest of Alexander and the great restoration of Zoroastrianism in the third century of our era, under the Sassanian dynasty. At this period all obtainable Zoroastrian scriptures were collected, the compilation was codified, and a detailed notice made of the contents of each of the original Nasks compared with the portions then surviving. The original Avesta was, it would appear, a sort of encyclopædic work; not of religion alone, but of useful knowledge relating to law, to the arts, science, the professions, and to every-day life. If we may judge from the existing table of contents of these Nasks, the zealous Sassanians, even in the time of the collecting (A. D. 226–380), were able to restore but a fragment of the archetype, perhaps a fourth part of the original Avesta. Nor was this remnant destined to escape misfortune. The Mohammedan invasion, in the seventh century of our era added a final and crushing blow. Much of the religion that might otherwise have been handed down to us, despite «the accursed Iskander's» conquest, now perished through the sword and the Koran. Its loss, we must remember, is in part compensated by the Pahlavi religious literature of Sassanian days.

Fragmentary and disjointed as are the remnants of the Avesta, we are fortunate in possessing even this moiety of the Bible of Zoroaster, whose compass is about one tenth that of our own sacred book. A grouping of the existing texts is here presented:— 1. Yasna (including Gathas). 2. Visperad. 3. Yashts. 4. Minor Texts. 5. Vendidad. 6. Fragments.

Even these texts no single manuscript in our time contains complete. The present collection is made by combining various Avestan codexes. In spite of the great antiquity of the literature, all the existing manuscripts are comparatively young. None is older than the thirteenth century of our own era, while the direct history of only one or two can be followed back to about the tenth century. This mere external circumstance has of course no bearing on the actual early age of the Zoroastrian scriptures. It must be kept in mind that Zoroaster lived at least six centuries before the birth of Christ.

Among the six divisions of our present Avesta, the Yasna, Visperad, and Vendidad are closely connected. They are employed in the daily ritual, and they are also accompanied by a version or interpretation in the Pahlavi language, which serves at the same time as a sort of commentary. The three divisions are often found combined into a sort of prayer-book, called Vendidad-Sadah (Vendidad Pure); *i. e.*, Avesta text without the Pahlavi rendering. The chapters in this case are arranged with special reference to liturgical usage.

Some idea of the character of the Avesta as it now exists may be derived from the following sketch of its contents and from the illustrative selections presented:—

1. *Yasna* (sacrifice, worship), the chief liturgical work of the sacred canon. It consists mainly of ascriptions of praise and of prayer, and corresponds nearly to our idea of a prayer-book. The Yasna comprises seventy-two chapters; these fall into three nearly equal parts. The middle, or oldest part, is the section of Gathas below described.

The meaning of the word *yasna* as above gives at once some conception of the nature of the texts. The Yasna chapters were recited at the sacrifice; a sacrifice that consisted not in blood-offerings, but in an offering of praise and thanksgiving, accompanied by ritual observances. The white-robed priest, girt with the sacred cord and wearing a veil, the *paitidana*, before his lips in the presence of the holy fire, begins the service by an invocation of Ahura Mazda (Ormazd) and the heavenly hierarchy; he then consecrates the *zaothra* water, the *myazda* or oblation, and the *baresma* or bundle of sacred twigs. He and his assistant now prepare the *haoma* (the *soma* of the Hindus), or juice of a sacred plant, the drinking of which formed part of the religious rite. At the ninth chapter of the book, the rhythmical chanting of the praises of Haoma is begun. This deified being, a personification of the consecrated drink, is supposed to have appeared before the prophet himself, and to have described to him the blessings which the *haoma* bestows upon its pious worshiper. The lines are metrical, as in fact they commonly are in the older parts of the Avesta, and the rhythm somewhat recalls the Kalevala verse of Longfellow's 'Hiawatha.' A specimen is here presented in translation:—

At the time of morning-worship
Haoma came to Zoroaster,
Who was serving at the Fire
And the holy Psalms intoning.

«What man art thou (asked the Prophet),
Who of all the world material
Art the fairest I have e'er seen
In my life, bright and immortal?»

The image of the sacred plant responds, and bids the priest prepare the holy extract.

Haoma then to me gave answer,
Haoma righteous, death-destroying:—
«Zoroaster, I am Haoma,
Righteous Haoma, death-destroying.
Do thou gather me, Spitama,
And prepare me as a potion;
Praise me, aye as shall hereafter
In their praise the Saviors praise me.»

Zoroaster again inquires, wishing to know of the pious men of old who worshiped Haoma and obtained blessings for their religious zeal. Among these, as is learned from Haoma, one was King Yima, whose reign was the time of the Golden Age; those were the happy days when a father looked as young as his children.

In the reign of princely Yima,
Heat there was not, cold there was not,
Neither age nor death existed,
Nor disease the work of Demons;

Son and father walked together
Fifteen years old, each in figure,
Long as Vivanghvat's son Yima,
The good Shepherd, ruled as sovereign.

For two chapters more, Haoma is extolled. Then follows the Avestan Creed (Yasna 12), a prose chapter that was repeated by those who joined in the early Zoroastrian faith, forsook the old marauding and nomadic habits that still characterize the modern Kurds, and adopted an agricultural habit of life, devoting themselves peaceably to cattle-raising, irrigation, and cultivation of the fields. The greater part of the Yasna book is of a liturgic or ritualistic nature, and need not here be further described. Special mention, however, must be made of the middle section of the Yasna, which is constituted by «the Five Gathas» (hymns, psalms), a division containing the seventeen sacred psalms, sayings, sermons, or teachings of Zoroaster himself. These Gathas form the oldest part of the entire canon of the Avesta. In them we see before our eyes the prophet of the new faith speaking with the fervor of the Psalmist of the Bible. In them we feel the thrill of ardor that characterizes a new and struggling religious band; we are warmed by the burning zeal of the preacher of a church militant. Now, however, comes a cry of despondency, a moment of faint-heartedness at the present triumph of evil, at the success of the wicked and the misery of the righteous; but this gives way to a clarion burst of hopefulness, the trumpet note of a prophet filled with the promise of ultimate victory, the triumph of good over evil. The end of the world cannot be far away; the final overthrow of Ahriman (Anra Mainyu) by Ormazd (Ahura Mazda) is assured; the establishment of a new order of things is certain; at the founding of this «kingdom» the resurrection of the dead will take place and the life eternal will be entered upon.

The third Gatha, Yasna 30, may be chosen by way of illustration. This is a sort of Mazdian Sermon on the Mount. Zoroaster preaches the doctrine of dualism, the warfare of good and evil in the world, and exhorts the faithful to choose aright and to combat Satan. The archangels Good Thought (Vohu Manah), Righteousness (Asha), Kingdom (Khshathra), appear as the helpers of Man (Maretan); for whose soul, as in the old English morality play, the Demons (Dævas) are contending. Allusions to the resurrection and final judgment, and to the new dispensation, are easily recognized in the spirited words of the prophet. A prose rendering of this metrical psalm is here attempted; the verse order, however, is preserved, though without rhythm.

A PSALM OF ZOROASTER: YASNA 30

Now shall I speak of things which ye who seek them shall bear in mind,
Namely, the praises of Ahura Mazda and the worship of Good Thought,
And the joy of [*lit.* through] Righteousness which is manifested through
Light.

2

Hearken with your ears to what is best; with clear understanding perceive it,
Awakening to our advising every man, personally, of the distinction
Between the two creeds, before the Great Event [*i. e.*, the Resurrection].

3

Now, Two Spirits primeval there were — twins which became known through their activity,
To wit, the Good and the Evil, in thought, word, and deed.
The wise have rightly distinguished between these two; not so the unwise.

4

And, now, when these Two Spirits first came together, they established
Life and destruction, and ordained how the world hereafter shall be,
To wit, the Worst World [Hell] for the wicked, but the Best Thought [Heaven] for the righteous.

5

The Wicked One [Ahriman] of these Two Spirits chose to do evil,
The Holiest Spirit [Ormazd] — who wears the solid heavens as a robe — chose Righteousness [Asha],
And [so also those] who zealously gratified Ormazd by virtuous deeds.

6

Not rightly did the Demons distinguish these Two Spirits; for Delusion came
Upon them, as they were deliberating, so that they chose the Worst Thought [Hell].
And away they rushed to Wrath [the Fiend] in order to corrupt the life of Man [Maretan].

7

And to him [*i. e.*, to Gaya Maretan] came Khshathra [Kingdom], Vohu Manah [Good Thought] and Asha [Righteousness],
And Armaiti [Archangel of Earth] gave [to him] bodily endurance unceasingly;
Of these, Thy [creatures], when Thou camest with Thy creations, he [*i. e.*, Gaya Maretan] was the first.

8

But when the retribution of the sinful shall come to pass,
Then shall Good Thought distribute Thy Kingdom,
Shall fulfill it for those who shall deliver Satan [Druj] into the hand of Righteousness [Asha].

9

And so may we be such as make the world renewed,
And may Ahura Mazda and Righteousness lend their aid,
That our thoughts may there be [set] where Faith is abiding.

10

For at the [final] Dispensation, the blow of annihilation to Satan shall come to pass;
But those who participate in a good report [in the Life Record] shall meet together
In the happy home of Good Thought, and of Mazda, and of Righteousness.

11

If, O ye men, ye mark these doctrines which Mazda gave,
And [mark] the weal and the woe—namely, the long torment of the wicked,
And the welfare of the righteous—then in accordance with these [doctrines] there will be happiness hereafter.

The *Visperad* (all the masters) is a short collection of prosaic invocations and laudations of sacred things. Its twenty-four sections form a supplement to the Yasna. Whatever interest this division of the Avesta possesses lies entirely on the side of the ritual, and not in the field of literature. In this respect it differs widely from the book of the Yashts, which is next to be mentioned.

The *Yashts* (praises of worship) form a poetical book of twenty-one hymns in which the angels of the religion, «the worshipful ones» (*Yazatas*, *Izads*), are glorified, and the heroes of former days. Much of the material of the Yashts is evidently drawn from pre-Zoroastrian sagas which have been remodeled and adopted, worked over and modified, and incorporated into the canon of the new-founded religion. There is a mythological and legendary atmosphere about the Yashts, and Firdausi's ‹Shah Nameh› serves to throw light on many of the events portrayed in them, or allusions that would otherwise be obscure. All the longer Yashts are in verse, and some of them have poetic merit. Chiefly to be mentioned among the longer ones are: first, the one in praise of Ardvi Sura Anahita, or the stream celestial (Yt. 5); second, the Yasht which exalts the star Tishtrya and his victory over the demon of drought (Yt. 8); then the one devoted to the Fravashis or glorified souls of the righteous (Yt. 13) as well as the Yasht in honor of Verethraghna, the incarnation of Victory (Yt. 14). Selections from the others, Yt. 10 and Yt. 19, which are among the noblest, are here given.

The first of the two chosen (Yt. 10) is dedicated to the great divinity Mithra, the genius who presides over light, truth, and the sun (Yt. 10, 13).

Foremost he, the celestial angel,
Mounts above Mount Hara (Alborz)
In advance of the sun immortal
Which is drawn by fleeting horses;
He it is, in gold adornment
First ascends the beauteous summits
Thence beneficent he glances
Over all the abode of Aryans.

As the god of light and of truth and as one of the judges of the dead, he rides out in lordly array to the battle and takes an active part in the conflict, wreaking vengeance upon those who at any time in their life have spoken falsely, belied their oath, or broken their pledge. His war-chariot and panoply are described in mingled lines of verse and prose, which may thus be rendered (Yt. 10, 128–132):—

By the side of Mithra's chariot,
Mithra, lord of the wide pastures,
Stand a thousand bows well-fashioned
(The bow has a string of cowgut).

By his chariot also are standing a thousand vulture-feathered, gold-notched, lead-poised, well-fashioned arrows (the barb is of iron); likewise a thousand spears well-fashioned and sharp-piercing, and a thousand steel battle-axes, two-edged and well-fashioned; also a thousand bronze clubs well-fashioned.

And by Mithra's chariot also
Stands a mace, fair and well-striking,
With a hundred knobs and edges,
Dashing forward, felling heroes;
Out of golden bronze 'tis molded.

The second illustrative extract will be taken from Yasht 19, which magnifies in glowing strains the praises of the Kingly Glory. This «kingly glory» (*kavaem hvareno*) is a sort of halo, radiance, or mark of divine right, which was believed to be possessed by the kings and heroes of Iran in the long line of its early history. One hero who bore the glory was the mighty warrior Thraetaona (Feridun), the vanquisher of the serpent-monster Azhi Dahaka (Zohak), who was depopulating the world by his fearful daily banquet of the brains of two children. The victory was a glorious triumph for Thraetaona (Yt. 19, 37):—

He who slew Azhi Dahaka,
Three-jawed monster, triple-headed,

With six eyes and myriad senses,
Fiend demoniac, full of power,
Evil to the world, and wicked.
This fiend full of power, the Devil
Anra Mainyu had created,
Fatal to the world material,
Deadly to the world of Righteousness.

Of equal puissance was another noble champion, the valiant Keresaspa, who dispatched a raging demon who, though not yet grown to man's estate, was threatening the world. The monster's thrasonical boasting is thus given (Yt. 19, 43):—

I am yet only a stripling,
But if ever I come to manhood
I shall make the earth my chariot
And shall make a wheel of heaven.
I shall drive the Holy Spirit
Down from out the shining heaven,
I shall rout the Evil Spirit
Up from out the dark abysm;
They as steeds shall draw my chariot,
God and Devil yoked together.

Passing over a collection of shorter petitions, praises, and blessings which may conveniently be grouped together as 'Minor Prayers,' for they answer somewhat to our idea of a daily manual of morning devotion, we may turn to the Vendidad (law against the demons), the Iranian Pentateuch. Tradition asserts that in the Vendidad we have preserved a specimen of one of the original Nasks. This may be true, but even the superficial student will see that it is in any case a fragmentary remnant. Interesting as the Vendidad is to the student of early rites, observances, manners, and customs, it is nevertheless a barren field for the student of literature, who will find in it little more than wearisome prescriptions like certain chapters of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It need only be added that at the close of the colloquy between Zoroaster and Ormazd given in Vend. 6, he will find the origin of the modern Parsi «Towers of Silence.»

Among the Avestan Fragments, attention might finally be called to one which we must be glad has not been lost. It is an old metrical bit (Frag. 4, 1–3) in praise of the Airyama Ishya Prayer (Yt. 54, 1). This is the prayer that shall be intoned by the Savior and his companions at the end of the world, when the resurrection will take place; and it will serve as a sort of last trump, at the sound of which the dead rise from their graves and evil is banished from the world. Ormazd himself says to Zoroaster (Frag. 4, 1–3):—

The Airyama Ishya prayer, I tell thee,
Upright, holy Zoroaster,
Is the greatest of all prayers.
Verily among all prayers
It is this one which I gifted
With revivifying powers.

This prayer shall the Saoshyants, Saviors,
Chant, and at the chanting of it
I shall rule over my creatures,
I who am Ahura Mazda.
Not shall Ahriman have power,
Anra Mainyu, o'er my creatures,
He (the fiend) of foul religion.
In the earth shall Ahriman hide,
In the earth the demons hide.
Up the dead again shall rise,
And within their lifeless bodies
Incorporate life shall be restored.

Inadequate as brief extracts must be to represent the sacred books of a people, the citations here given will serve to show that the Avesta which is still recited in solemn tones by the white-robed priests of Bombay, the modern representatives of Zoroaster, the Prophet of ancient days, is a survival not without value to those who appreciate whatever has been preserved for us of the world's earlier literature. For readers who are interested in the subject there are several translations of the Avesta. The best (except for the Gathas, where the translation is weak) is the French version by Darmesteter, 'Le Zend Avesta,' published in the 'Annales du Musée Guimet' (Paris, 1892-93). An English rendering by Darmesteter and Mills is contained in the 'Sacred Books of the East,' Vols. iv., xxiii., xxxi.

A. V. Williams Jackson

A PRAYER FOR KNOWLEDGE

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: when praise is to be offered, how shall I complete the praise of the One like You, O Mazda? Let the One like Thee declare it earnestly to the friend who is such as I, thus through Thy Righteousness within us to offer friendly help to us, so that the One like Thee may draw near us through Thy Good Mind within the Soul.

2. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright how, in pleasing Him, may we serve the Supreme One of the better world; yea, how to serve that chief who may grant us those blessings of his grace and who will seek for grateful requitals at our hands; for He, bountiful as He is through the Righteous Order, will hold off ruin from us all, guardian as He is for both the worlds, O Spirit Mazda! and a friend.

3. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who by generation is the first father of the Righteous Order within the world? Who gave the recurring sun and stars their undeviating way? Who established that whereby the moon waxes, and whereby she wanes, save Thee? These things, O Great Creator! would I know, and others likewise still.

4. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who from beneath hath sustained the earth and the clouds above that they do not fall? Who made the waters and the plants? Who to the wind has yoked on the storm-clouds the swift and fleetest two? Who, O Great Creator! is the inspirer of the good thoughts within our souls?

5. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who, as a skillful artisan, hath made the lights and the darkness? Who, as thus skillful, hath made sleep and the zest of waking hours? Who spread the Auroras, the noontides and midnight, monitors to discerning man, duty's true guides?

6. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright these things which I shall speak forth, if they are truly thus. Doth the Piety which we cherish in reality increase the sacred orderliness within our actions? To these Thy true saints hath she given the Realm through the Good Mind? For whom hast thou made the Motherkine, the produce of joy?

7. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who fashioned Aramaiti (our piety) the beloved, together with Thy Sovereign Power? Who, through his guiding wisdom, hath made the son revering the father? Who made him beloved? With questions such as these, so abundant, O Mazda! I press Thee, O bountiful Spirit, Thou maker of all!

Yasna xliv.: Translation of L. H. Mills.

THE ANGEL OF DIVINE OBEDIENCE

We worship Sraosha [Obedience] the blessed, whom four racers draw in harness, white and shining, beautiful and (27) powerful, quick to learn and fleet, obeying before speech, heeding orders from the mind, with their hoofs of horn gold-covered, (28) fleeter than [our] horses, swifter than the winds, more rapid than the rain [-drops as they fall]; yea, fleeter than the clouds, or well-winged birds, or the well-shot arrow as it flies, (29) which overtake these swift ones all, as they fly after them pursuing, but which are never overtaken when they flee, which plunge away from both the weapons [hurled on this side and on that] and draw Sraosha with them, the good Sraosha and the blessed; which from both the weapons [those on this side and on that] bear the good Obedience the blessed, plunging forward in their zeal, when he takes his course from India on the East and when he lights down in the West.

Yasna lvii. 27–29: Translation of L. H. Mills.

TO THE FIRE

I offer my sacrifice and homage to thee, the Fire, as a good offering, and an offering with our hail of salvation, even as an offering of praise with benedictions, to thee, the Fire, O Ahura, Mazda's son! Meet for sacrifice art thou, and worthy of [our] homage. And as meet for sacrifice, and thus worthy of our homage, may'st thou be in the houses of men [who worship Mazda]. Salvation be to this man who worships thee in verity and truth, with wood in hand and baresma [sacred twigs] ready, with flesh in hand and holding too the mortar. 2. And mayst thou be [ever] fed with wood as the prescription orders. Yea, mayst thou have thy perfume justly, and thy sacred butter without fail, and thine andirons regularly placed. Be of full age as to thy nourishment, of the canon's age as to the measure of thy food. O Fire, Ahura, Mazda's son! 3. Be now aflame within this house; be ever without fail in flame; be all ashine within this house: for long time be thou thus to the furtherance of the heroic [renovation], to the completion of [all] progress, yea, even till the good heroic [millennial] time when that renovation shall have become complete. 4. Give me, O Fire, Ahura, Mazda's son! a speedy glory, speedy nourishment and speedy booty and abundant glory, abundant nourishment, abundant booty, an expanded mind, and nimbleness of tongue and soul and understanding, even an understanding continually growing in its largeness, and that never wanders.

Yasna lxii. 1–4: Translation of L. H. Mills.

THE GODDESS OF THE WATERS

OFFER up a sacrifice unto this spring of mine, Ardvi Sura Anahita (the exalted, mighty, and undefiled, image of the (128) stream celestial), who stands carried forth in the shape of a maid, fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high-girded, pure, nobly born of a glorious race, wearing a mantle fully embroidered with gold. 129. Ever holding the baresma in her hand, according to the rules; she wears square golden ear-rings on her ears bored, and a golden necklace around her beautiful neck, she, the nobly born Ardvi Sura Anahita; and she girded her waist tightly, so that her breasts may be well shaped, that they may be tightly pressed. 128. Upon her head Ardvi Sura Anahita bound a golden crown, with a hundred stars, with eight rays, a fine well-made crown, with fillets streaming down. 129. She is clothed with garments of beaver, Ardvi Sura Anahita; with the skin of thirty beavers, of those that bear four young ones, that are the finest kind of beavers; for the skin of the beaver that lives in water is the finest colored of all skins, and when worked at the right time it shines to the eye with full sheen of silver and gold.

Yasht v. 126–129: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

GUARDIAN SPIRITS

WE WORSHIP the good, strong, beneficent Fravashis [guardian spirits] of the faithful; with helms of brass, with weap- (45) ons of brass, with armor of brass; who struggle in the fights for victory in garments of light, arraying the battles and bringing them forwards, to kill thousands of Dævas [demons]. 46. When the wind blows from behind them and brings their breath unto men, then men know where blows the breath of victory: and they pay pious homage unto the good, strong, beneficent Fravashis of the faithful, with their hearts prepared and their arms uplifted. 47. Whichever side they have been first worshiped in the fulness of faith of a devoted heart, to that side turn the awful Fravashis of the faithful along with Mithra [angel of truth and light] and Rashnu [Justice] and the awful cursing thought of the wise and the victorious wind.

Yasht xiii. 45–47: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

AN ANCIENT SINDBAD

The manly-hearted Keresaspa was the sturdiest of the men of strength, for Manly Courage clave unto him. We worship [this] Manly Courage, firm of foot, unsleeping, quick to rise, and fully awake, that clave unto Keresaspa [the hero], who killed the snake Srvara, the horse-devouring, man-devouring, yellow poisonous snake, over which yellow poison flowed a thumb's breadth thick. Upon him Kerasaspa was cooking his food in a brass vessel, at the time of noon. The fiend felt the heat and darted away; he rushed from under the brass vessel and upset the boiling water: the manly-hearted Keresaspa fell back affrighted.

Yasht xix. 38–40: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

THE WISE MAN

Verily I say it unto thee, O Spitama Zoroaster! the man who has a wife is far above him who lives in continence; he who keeps a house is far above him who has none; he who has children is far above the childless man; he who has riches is far above him who has none.

And of two men, he who fills himself with meat receives in him good spirit [Vohu Mano] much more than he who does not do so; the latter is all but dead; the former is above him by the worth of a sheep, by the worth of an ox, by the worth of a man.

It is this man that can strive against the onsets of death; that can strive against the well-darted arrow; that can strive against the winter fiend with thinnest garment on; that can strive against the wicked tyrant and smite him on the head; it is this man that can strive against the ungodly fasting Ashemaogha [the fiends and heretics who do not eat].

Vendidad iv. 47–49: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

INVOCATION TO RAIN

«Come, come on, O clouds, along the sky, through the air, down on the earth, by thousands of drops, by myriads of drops,» thus say, O holy Zoroaster! «to destroy sickness altogether, to destroy death altogether, to destroy altogether the sickness made by the Gaini, to destroy altogether the death made by Gaini, to destroy altogether Gadha and Apagadha.

«If death come at eve, may healing come at daybreak!

«If death come at daybreak, may healing come at night!

«If death come at night, may healing come at dawn!

«Let showers shower down new waters, new earth, new trees, new health, and new healing powers.»

Vendidad xxi. 2: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

A PRAYER FOR HEALING

Ahura Mazda spake unto Spitama Zoroaster, saying, «I, Ahura Mazda, the Maker of all good things, when I made this mansion, the beautiful, the shining, seen afar (there may I go up, there may I arrive)!

Then the ruffian looked at me; the ruffian Anra Mainyu, the deadly, wrought against me nine diseases and ninety, and nine hundred, and nine thousand, and nine times ten thousand diseases. So mayest thou heal me, O Holy Word, thou most glorious one!

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand fleet, swift-running steeds; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand fleet, high-humped camels; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand brown faultless oxen; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand young of all species of small cattle; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

And I will bless thee with the fair blessing-spell of the righteous, the friendly blessing-spell of the righteous, that makes the empty swell to fullness and the full to overflowing, that comes to help him who was sickening, and makes the sick man sound again.

Vendidad xxii. 1–5: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

FRAGMENT

All good thoughts, and all good words, and all good deeds are thought and spoken and done with intelligence; and all evil thoughts and words and deeds are thought and spoken and done with folly.

2. And let [the men who think and speak and do] all good thoughts and words and deeds inhabit Heaven [as their home]. And let those who think and speak and do evil thoughts and words and deeds abide in Hell. For to all who think good thoughts, speak good words, and do good deeds, Heaven, the best world, belongs. And this is evident and as of course.

Avesta, Fragment iii.: Translation of L. H. Mills.

AVICEBRON

(1028–?1058)

Avicebron, or Avicebrol (properly Solomon ben Judah ibn Gabirol), one of the most famous of Jewish poets, and the most original of Jewish thinkers, was born at Cordova, in Spain, about A. D. 1028. Of the events of his life we know little; and it was only in 1845 that Munk, in the 'Literaturblatt des Orient,' proved the Jewish poet Ibn Gabirol to be one and the same person with Avicebron, so often quoted by the Schoolmen as an Arab philosopher. He was educated at Saragossa, spent some years at Malaga, and died, hardly thirty years old, about 1058. His disposition seems to have been rather melancholy.

Of his philosophic works, which were written in Arabic, by far the most important, and that which lent lustre to his name, was the 'Fountain of Life'; a long treatise in the form of a dialogue between teacher and pupil, on what was then regarded as the fundamental question in philosophy, the nature and relations of Matter and Form. The original, which seems never to have been popular with either Jews or Arabs, is not known to exist; but there exists a complete Latin translation (the work having found appreciation among Christians), which has recently been edited with great care by Professor Bäumker of Breslau, under the title ‘Avencebrolis Fons Vitæ, ex Arabico in Latinum translatus ab Johanne Hispano et Dominico Gundissalino’ (Münster, 1895). There is also a series of extracts from it in Hebrew. Besides this, he wrote a half-popular work, ‘On the Improvement of Character,’ in which he brings the different virtues into relation with the five senses. He is, further, the reputed author of a work ‘On the Soul,’ and the reputed compiler of a famous anthology, ‘A Choice of Pearls,’ which appeared, with an English translation by B. H. Ascher, in London, in 1859. In his poetry, which, like that of other mediæval Hebrew poets, Moses ben Ezra, Judah Halévy, etc., is partly liturgical, partly worldly, he abandons native forms, such as we find in the Psalms, and follows artificial Arabic models, with complicated rhythms and rhyme, unsuited to Hebrew, which, unlike Arabic, is poor in inflections. Nevertheless, many of his liturgical pieces are still used in the services of the synagogue, while his worldly ditties find admirers elsewhere. (See A. Geiger, ‘Ibn Gabirol und seine Dichtungen,’ Leipzig, 1867.)

The philosophy of Ibn Gabirol is a compound of Hebrew monotheism and that Neo-Platonic Aristotelianism which for two hundred years had been current in the Muslim schools at Bagdad, Basra, etc., and which the learned Jews were largely instrumental in carrying to the Muslims of Spain. For it must never be forgotten that the great translators and intellectual purveyors of the Middle Ages were the Jews. (See Steinschneider, ‘Die Hebräischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters, und die Juden als Dolmetscher,’ 2 vols., Berlin, 1893.)

The aim of Ibn Gabirol, like that of the other three noted Hebrew thinkers, Philo, Maimonides, and Spinoza, was — given God, to account for creation; and this he tried to do by means of Neo-Platonic Aristotelianism, such as he found in the Pseudo-Pythagoras, Pseudo-Empedocles, Pseudo-Aristotelian ‘Theology’ (an abstract from Plotinus), and ‘Book on Causes’ (an abstract from Proclus's ‘Institutio Theologica’). It is well known that Aristotle, who made God a «thinking of thinking,» and placed matter, as something eternal, over against him, never succeeded in bringing God into effective connection with the world (see K. Elser, ‘Die Lehredes Aristotles über das Wirken Gottes,’ Münster, 1893); and this defect the Greeks never afterward remedied until the time of Plotinus, who, without propounding a doctrine of emanation, arranged the universe as a hierarchy of existence, beginning with the Good, and descending through correlated Being and Intelligence, to Soul or Life, which produces Nature with all its multiplicity, and so stands on «the horizon» between undivided and divided being. In the famous encyclopædia of the «Brothers of Purity,» written in the East about A. D. 1000, and representing Muslim thought at its best, the hierarchy takes this form: God, Intelligence, Soul, Primal Matter, Secondary Matter, World, Nature, the Elements, Material Things. (See Dieterici, ‹Die Philosophie der Araber im X. Jahrhundert n. Chr.,› 2 vols., Leipzig, 1876–79.) In the hands of Ibn Gabirol, this is transformed thus: God, Will, Primal Matter, Form, Intelligence, Soul—vegetable, animal, rational, Nature, the source of the visible world. If we compare these hierarchies, we shall see that Ibn Gabirol makes two very important changes: *first*, he introduces an altogether new element, viz., the Will; *second*, instead of placing Intelligence second in rank, next to God, he puts Will, Matter, and Form before it. Thus, whereas the earliest thinkers, drawing on Aristotle, had sought for an explanation of the world in Intelligence, he seeks for it in Will, thus approaching the standpoint of Schopenhauer. Moreover, whereas they had made Matter and Form originate in Intelligence, he includes the latter, together with the material world, among things compounded of Matter and Form. Hence, everything, save God and His Will, which is but the expression of Him, is compounded of Matter and Form (cf. Dante, ‹Paradiso,› i. 104 *seq.*). Had he concluded from this that God, in order to occupy this exceptional position, must be pure matter (or substance), he would have reached the standpoint of Spinoza. As it is, he stands entirely alone in the Middle Age, in making the world the product of Will, and not of Intelligence, as the Schoolmen and the classical philosophers of Germany held.

The ‹Fountain of Life› is divided into five books, whose subjects are as follows:—I. Matter and Form, and their various kinds. II. Matter as the bearer of body, and the subject of the categories. III. Separate Substances, in the created intellect, standing between God and the World. IV. Matter and Form in simple substances. V. Universal Matter and Universal Form, with a discussion of the Divine Will, which, by producing and uniting Matter and Form, brings being out of non-being, and so is the ‹Fountain of Life.› Though the author is influenced by Jewish cosmogony, his system, as such, is almost purely Neo-Platonic. It remains one of the most considerable attempts that have ever been made to find in spirit the explanation of the world; not only making all matter at bottom one, but also maintaining that while form is due to the divine will, matter is due to the divine essence, so that both are equally spiritual. It is especially interesting as showing us, by contrast, how far Christian thinking, which rested on much the same foundation with it, was influenced and confined by Christian dogmas, especially by those of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

Ibn Gabirol's thought exerted a profound influence, not only on subsequent Hebrew thinkers, like Joseph ben Saddig, Maimonides, Spinoza, but also on the Christian Schoolmen, by whom he is often quoted, and on Giordano Bruno. Through Spinoza and Bruno this influence has passed into the modern world, where it still lives. Dante, though naming many Arab philosophers, never alludes to Ibn Gabirol; yet he borrowed more of his sublimest thoughts from the ‹Fountain of Life› than from any other book. (Cf. Ibn Gabirol's ‹Bedeutung für die Geschichte der Philosophie,› appendix to Vol. i. of M. Joël's ‹Beiträge zur Gesch. der Philos.,› Breslau, 1876.) If we set aside the hypostatic form in which Ibn Gabirol puts forward his ideas, we shall find a remarkable similarity between his system and that of Kant, not to speak of that of Schopenhauer. For the whole subject, see J. Guttman's ‹Die Philosophie des Salomon Ibn Gabirol› (Göttingen, 1889).

ON MATTER AND FORM

From the ‹Fountain of Life,› Fifth Treatise

Intelligence is finite in both directions: on the upper side, by reason of will, which is above it; on the lower, by reason of matter, which is outside of its essence. Hence, spiritual substances are finite with respect to matter, because they differ through it, and distinction is the cause of finitude; in respect to forms they are infinite on the lower side, because one form flows from another. And we must bear in mind that that part of matter which is above heaven, the more it ascends from it to the principle of creation, becomes the more spiritual in form, whereas that part which descends lower than the heaven toward quiet will be more corporeal in form. Matter, intelligence, and soul comprehend heaven, and heaven comprehends the elements. And just as, if you imagine your soul standing at the extreme height of heaven, and looking back upon the earth, the earth will seem but a point, in comparison with the heaven, so are corporeal and spiritual substance in comparison with the will. And first matter is stable in the knowledge of God, as the earth in the midst of heaven. And the form diffused through it is as the light diffused through the air. . . .

We must bear in mind that the unity induced by the will (we might say, the will itself) binds matter to form. Hence that union is stable, firm, and perpetual from the beginning of its creation; and thus unity sustains all things.

Matter is movable, in order that it may receive form, in conformity with its appetite for receiving goodness and delight through the reception of form. In like manner, everything that is, desires to move, in order that it may attain something of the goodness of the primal being; and the nearer anything is to the primal being, the more easily it reaches this, and the further off it is, the more slowly and with the longer motion and time it does so. And the motion of matter and other substances is nothing but appetite and love for the mover toward which it moves, as, for example, matter moves toward form, through desire for the primal being; for matter requires light from that which is in the essence of will, which compels matter to move toward will and to desire it: and herein will and matter are alike. And because matter is receptive of the form that has flowed down into it by the flux of violence and necessity, matter must necessarily move to receive form; and therefore things are constrained by will and obedience in turn. Hence by the light which it has from will, matter moves toward will and desires it; but when it receives form, it lacks nothing necessary for knowing and desiring it, and nothing remains for it to seek for. For example, in the morning the air has an imperfect splendor from the sun; but at noon it has a perfect splendor, and there remains nothing for it to demand of the sun. Hence the desire for the first motion is a likeness between all substances and the first Maker, because it is impressed upon all things to move toward the first; because particular matter desires particular form, and the matter of plants and animals, which, in generating, move toward the forms of plants and animals, are also influenced by the particular form acting in them. In like manner the sensible soul moves toward sensible forms, and the rational soul to intelligible forms, because the particular soul, which is called the first intellect, while it is in its principle, is susceptible of form; but when it shall have received the form of universal intelligence, which is the second intellect, and shall become intelligence, then it will be strong to act, and will be called the second intellect; and since particular souls have such a desire, it follows that universal souls must have a desire for universal forms. The same thing must be said of natural matter,—that is, the substance which sustains the nine categories; because this matter moves to take on the first qualities, then to the mineral form, then to the vegetable, then to the sensible. then to the rational, then to the intelligible, until at last it is united to the form of universal intelligence. And this primal matter desires primal form; and all things that are, desire union and commixture, that so they may be assimilated to their principle; and therefore, genera, species, differentiæ, and contraries are united through something in singulars.

Thus, matter is like an empty schedule and a wax tablet; whereas form is like a painted shape and words set down, from which the reader reaches the end of science. And when the soul knows these, it desires to know the wonderful painter of them, to whose essence it is impossible to ascend. Thus matter and form are the two closed gates of intelligence, which it is hard for intelligence to open and pass through, because the substance of intelligence is below them, and made up of them. And when the soul has subtilized itself, until it can penetrate them, it arrives at the word, that is, at perfect will; and then its motion ceases, and its joy remains.

An analogy to the fact that the universal will actualizes universal form in the matter of intelligence is the fact that the particular will actualizes the particular form in the soul without time, and life and essential motion in the matter of the soul, and local motion and other motions in the matter of nature. But all these motions are derived from the will; and so all things are moved by the will, just as the soul causes rest or motion in the body according to its will. And this motion is different according to the greater or less proximity of things to the will. And if we remove action from the will, the will will be identical with the primal essence; whereas, with action, it is different from it. Hence, will is as the painter of all forms; the matter of each thing as a tablet; and the form of each thing as the picture on the tablet. It binds form to matter, and is diffused through the whole of matter, from highest to lowest, as the soul through the body; and as the virtue of the sun, diffusing its light, unites with the light, and with it descends into the air, so the virtue of the will unites with the form which it imparts to all things, and descends with it. On this ground it is said that the first cause is in all things, and that there is nothing without it.

The will holds all things together by means of form; whence we likewise say that form holds all things together. Thus, form is intermediate between will and matter, receiving from will, and giving to matter. And will acts without time or motion, through its own might. If the action of soul and intelligence, and the infusion of light are instantaneous, much more so is that of will.

Creation comes from the high creator, and is an emanation, like the issue of water flowing from its source; but whereas water follows water without intermission or rest, creation is without motion or time. The sealing of form upon matter, as it flows in from the will, is like the sealing or reflection of a form in a mirror, when it is seen. And as sense receives the form of the felt without the matter, so everything that acts upon another acts solely through its own form, which it simply impresses upon that other. Hence genus, species, differentia, property, accident, and all forms in matter are merely an impression made by wisdom.

The created soul is gifted with the knowledge which is proper to it; but after it is united to the body, it is withdrawn from receiving those impressions which are proper to it, by reason of the very darkness of the body, covering and extinguishing its light, and blurring it, just as in the case of a clear mirror: when dense substance is put over it its light is obscured. And therefore God, by the subtlety of his substance, formed this world, and arranged it according to this most beautiful order, in which it is, and equipped the soul with senses, wherein, when it uses them, that which is hidden in it is manifested in act; and the soul, in apprehending sensible things, is like a man who sees many things, and when he departs from them, finds that nothing remains with him but the vision of imagination and memory.

We must also bear in mind that, while matter is made by essence, form is made by will. And it is said that matter is the seat of God, and that will, the giver of form, sits on it and rests upon it. And through the knowledge of these things we ascend to those things which are behind them, that is, to the cause why there is anything; and this is a knowledge of the world of deity, which is the greatest whole: whatever is below it is very small in comparison with it.

ROBERT AYTOUN

(1570–1638)

This Scottish poet was born in his father's castle of Kinaldie, near St. Andrews, Fifeshire, in 1570. He was descended from the Norman family of De Vescy, a younger son of which settled in Scotland and received from Robert Bruce the lands of Aytoun in Berwickshire. Kincardie came into the family about 1539. Robert Aytoun was educated at St. Andrews, taking his degree in 1588, traveled on the Continent like other wealthy Scottish gentlemen, and studied law at the University of Paris. Returning in 1603, he delighted James I. by a Latin poem congratulating him on his accession to the English throne. Thereupon the poet received an invitation to court as Groom of the Privy Chamber. He rose rapidly, was knighted in 1612, and made Gentleman of the Bedchamber to King James and private secretary to Queen Anne. When Charles I. ascended the throne, Aytoun was retained, and held many important posts. According to Aubrey, «he was acquainted with all the witts of his time in England.» Sir Robert was essentially a court poet, and belonged to the cultivated circle of Scottish favorites that James gathered around him; yet there is no mention of him in the gossipy diaries of the period, and almost none in the State papers. He seems, however, to have been popular: Ben Jonson boasts that Aytoun «loved me dearly.» It is not surprising that his mild verses should have faded in the glorious light of the contemporary poets.

ROBERT AYTOUN

He wrote in Greek and French, and many of his Latin poems were published under the title ‹Delitiæ Poetarum Scotorum› (Amsterdam, 1637). His English poems on such themes as a ‹Love Dirge,› ‹The Poet Forsaken,› ‹The Lover's Remonstrance,› ‹Address to an Inconstant Mistress,› etc., do not show depth of emotion. He says of himself:—

«Yet have I been a lover by report,
  Yea, I have died for love as others do;
But praised be God, it was in such a sort
  That I revived within an hour or two.»

The lines beginning «I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,» quoted below with their adaptation by Burns, do not appear in his MSS., collected by his heir Sir John Aytoun, nor in the edition of his works with a memoir prepared by Dr. Charles Rogers, published in Edinburgh in 1844 and reprinted privately in 1871. Dean Stanley, in his 'Memorials of Westminster Abbey,' accords to him the original of 'Auld Lang Syne,' which Rogers includes in his edition. Burns's song follows the version attributed to Francis Temple.

Aytoun passed his entire life in luxury, died in Whitehall Palace in 1638, and was the first Scottish poet buried in Westminster Abbey. His memorial bust was taken from a portrait by Vandyke.

INCONSTANCY UPBRAIDED

I LOVED thee once, I'll love no more;
Thine be the grief as is the blame:
Thou art not what thou wast before,
What reason I should be the same?
He that can love unloved again,
Hath better store of love than brain;
God send me love my debts to pay,
While unthrifts fool their love away.

Nothing could have my love o'erthrown,
If thou hadst still continued mine;
Yea, if thou hadst remained thy own,
I might perchance have yet been thine.
But thou thy freedom didst recall,
That it thou might elsewhere inthrall;
And then how could I but disdain
A captive's captive to remain?

When new desires had conquered thee,
And changed the object of thy will,
It had been lethargy in me,
Not constancy, to love thee still.
Yea, it had been a sin to go
And prostitute affection so;
Since we are taught no prayers to say
To such as must to others pray.

Yet do thou glory in thy choice,
Thy choice of his good fortune boast;
I'll neither grieve nor yet rejoice
To see him gain what I have lost.

The height of my disdain shall be
To laugh at him, to blush for thee;
To love thee still, but go no more
A-begging to a beggar's door.

LINES TO AN INCONSTANT MISTRESS

I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,
And I might have gone near to love thee,
Had I not found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak had power to move thee.
But I can let thee now alone,
As worthy to be loved by none.

I do confess thou'rt sweet, yet find
Thee such an unthrift of thy sweets,
Thy favors are but like the wind
Which kisseth everything it meets!
And since thou canst love more than one,
Thou'rt worthy to be loved by none.

The morning rose that untouched stands,
Armed with her briers, how sweet she smells!
But plucked and strained through ruder hands,
Her scent no longer with her dwells.
But scent and beauty both are gone,
And leaves fall from her one by one.

Such fate ere long will thee betide,
When thou hast handled been awhile,
Like fair flowers to be thrown aside;
And thou shalt sigh while I shall smile,
To see thy love to every one
Hath brought thee to be loved by none.

Burns's Adaptation

I do confess thou art sae fair,
I wad been ower the lugs in love
Had I na found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak, thy heart could move.
I do confess thee sweet — but find
Thou art sae thriftless o' thy sweets,
Thy favors are the silly wind,
That kisses ilka thing it meets.

See yonder rosebud rich in dew,
Among its native briers sae coy,
How sune it tines its scent and hue
When pu'd and worn a common toy.
Sic fate, ere lang, shall thee betide,
Tho' thou may gaily bloom awhile;
Yet sune thou shalt be thrown aside
Like any common weed and vile.

WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE AYTOUN

(1813–1865)

AYTOUN the second, balladist, humorist, and Tory, in proportions of about equal importance, — one of the group of wits and devotees of the *status quo* who made Blackwood's Magazine so famous in its early days,— was born in Edinburgh, June 21st, 1813. He was the son of Roger Aytoun, «writer to the Signet»; and a descendant of Sir Robert Aytoun (1570–1638), the poet and friend of Ben Jonson, who followed James VI. from Scotland and who is buried in Westminster Abbey. Both Aytoun's parents were literary. His mother, who knew Sir Walter Scott, and who gave Lockhart many details for his biography, helped the lad in his poems. She seemed to him to know all the ballads ever sung. His earliest verses were praised by Professor John Wilson («Christopher North»), the first editor of Blackwood's, whose daughter he married in 1849. At the age of nineteen he published his ‘Poland, Homer, and Other Poems’ (Edinburgh, 1832). After leaving the University of Edinburgh, he studied law in London, visited Germany, and returning to Scotland, was called to the bar in 1840. He disliked the profession, and used to say that though he followed the law he never could overtake it.

While in Germany he translated the first part of ‘Faust’ in blank verse, which was never published. Many of his translations from Uhland and Homer appeared in Blackwood's from 1836 to 1840, and many of his early writings were signed «Augustus Dunshunner.» In 1844 he joined the editorial staff of Blackwood's, to which for many years he contributed political articles, verse, translations of Goethe, and humorous sketches. In 1845 he became Professor of Rhetoric and Literature in the University of Edinburgh, a place which he held until 1864. About 1841 he became acquainted with Theodore Martin, and in association with him wrote a series of light papers interspersed with burlesque verses, which, reprinted from Blackwood's, became popular as the ‹Bon Gaultier Ballads.› Published in London in 1855, they reached their thirteenth edition in 1877.

«Some papers of a humorous kind, which I had published under the *nom de plume* of Bon Gaultier,» says Theodore Martin in his ‹Memoir of Aytoun,› «had hit Aytoun's fancy; and when I proposed to go on with others in a similar vein, he fell readily into the plan, and agreed to assist in it. In this way a kind of a Beaumont-and-Fletcher partnership commenced in a series of humorous papers, which appeared in Tait's and Fraser's magazines from 1842 to 1844. In these papers, in which we ran a-tilt, with all the recklessness of youthful spirits, against such of the tastes or follies of the day as presented an opening for ridicule or mirth,—at the same time that we did not altogether lose sight of a purpose higher than mere amusement,—appeared the verses, with a few exceptions, which subsequently became popular, and to a degree we then little contemplated, as the ‹Bon Gaultier Ballads.› Some of the best of these were exclusively Aytoun's, such as ‹The Massacre of the McPherson,› ‹The Rhyme of Sir Launcelot Bogle,› ‹The Broken Pitcher,› ‹The Red Friar and Little John,› ‹The Lay of Mr. Colt,› and that best of all imitations of the Scottish ballad, ‹The Queen in France.› Some were wholly mine, and the rest were produced by us jointly. Fortunately for our purpose, there were then living not a few poets whose style and manner of thought were sufficiently marked to make imitation easy, and sufficiently popular for a parody of their characteristics to be readily recognized. Macaulay's ‹Lays of Rome› and his two other fine ballads were still in the freshness of their fame. Lockhart's ‹Spanish Ballads› were as familiar in the drawing-room as in the study. Tennyson and Mrs. Browning were opening up new veins of poetry. These, with Wordsworth, Moore, Uhland, and others of minor note, lay ready to our hands,—as Scott, Byron, Crabbe, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey had done to James and Horace Smith in 1812, when writing the ‹Rejected Addresses.› Never, probably, were verses thrown off with a keener sense of enjoyment.»

With Theodore Martin he published also ‹Poems and Ballads of Goethe› (London, 1858). Mr. Aytoun's fame as a poet rests on his ‹Lays of the Cavaliers,› the themes of which are selected from stirring incidents of Scottish history, ranging from Flodden Field to the Battle of Culloden. The favorites in popular memory are ‹The Execution of Montrose› and ‹The Burial March of Dundee.› This book, published in London and Edinburgh in 1849, has gone through twenty-nine editions.

His dramatic poem, ‹Firmilian: a Spasmodic Tragedy,› written to ridicule the style of Bailey, Dobell, and Alexander Smith, and published in 1854, had so many excellent qualities that it was received as a serious production instead of a caricature. Aytoun introduced this in Blackwood's Magazine as a pretended review of an unpublished tragedy (as with the ‹Rolliad,› and as Lockhart had done in the case of «Peter's Letters,» so successfully that he had to write the book itself as a «second edition» to answer the demand for it). This review was so cleverly done that «most of the newspaper critics took the part of the poet against the reviewer, never suspecting the identity of both, and maintained the poetry to be fine poetry and the critic a dunce.» The sarcasm of ‹Firmilian› is so delicate that only those familiar with the school it is intended to satirize can fairly appreciate its qualities. The drama opens showing Firmilian in his study, planning the composition of ‹Cain: a Tragedy›; and being infused with the spirit of the hero, he starts on a career of crime. Among his deeds is the destruction of the cathedral of Badajoz, which first appears in his mental vision thus:—

«Methought I saw the solid vaults give way,
And the entire cathedral rise in air,
As if it leaped from Pandemonium's jaws.»

To effect this he employs—

«Some twenty barrels of the dusky grain
The secret of whose framing in an hour
Of diabolic jollity and mirth
Old Roger Bacon wormed from Beelzebub.»

When the horror is accomplished, at a moment when the inhabitants of Badajoz are at prayer, Firmilian rather enjoys the scene:—

«Pillars and altar, organ loft and screen,
With a singed swarm of mortals intermixed,
Whirling in anguish to the shuddering stars.»

«‹Firmilian,›» to quote from Aytoun's biographer again, «deserves to keep its place in literature, if only as showing how easy it is for a man of real poetic power to throw off, in sport, pages of sonorous and sparkling verse, simply by ignoring the fetters of nature and common-sense and dashing headlong on Pegasus through the wilderness of fancy.» Its extravagances of rhetoric can be imagined from the following brief extract, somewhat reminiscent of Marlowe:—

«And shall I then take Celsus for my guide,
Confound my brain with dull Justinian tomes,
Or stir the dust that lies o'er Augustine?
Not I, in faith! I've leaped into the air,
And clove my way through ether like a bird
That flits beneath the glimpses of the moon,
Right eastward, till I lighted at the foot
Of holy Helicon, and drank my fill
At the clear spout of Aganippe's stream;

I've rolled my limbs in ecstasy along
The selfsame turf on which old Homer lay
That night he dreamed of Helen and of Troy:
And I have heard, at midnight, the sweet strains
Come quiring from the hilltop, where, enshrined
In the rich foldings of a silver cloud,
The Muses sang Apollo into sleep.»

In 1856 was printed ‘Bothwell,’ a poetic monologue on Mary Stuart's lover. Of Aytoun's humorous sketches, the most humorous are ‘My First Spec in the Biggleswades,’ and ‘How We Got Up the Glen Mutchkin Railway’; tales written during the railway mania of 1845, which treat of the folly and dishonesty of its promoters, and show many typical Scottish characters. His ‘Ballads of Scotland’ was issued in 1858; it is an edition of the best ancient minstrelsy, with preface and notes. In 1861 appeared ‘Norman Sinclair,’ a novel published first in Blackwood's, and giving interesting pictures of society in Scotland and personal experiences.

After Professor Wilson's death, Aytoun was considered the leading man of letters in Scotland; a rank which he modestly accepted by writing in 1838 to a friend:—«I am getting a kind of fame as the literary man of Scotland. Thirty years ago, in the North countries, a fellow achieved an immense reputation as ‘The Tollman,’ being the solitary individual entitled by law to levy blackmail at a ferry.» In 1860 he was made Honorary President of the Associated Societies of the University of Edinburgh, his competitor being Thackeray. This was the place held afterward by Lord Lytton, Sir David Brewster, Carlyle, and Gladstone. Aytoun wrote the ‘The Life and Times of Richard the First’ (London, 1840), and in 1863 a ‘Nuptial Ode on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales.’

Aytoun was a man of great charm and geniality in society; even to Americans, though he detested America with the energy of fear—the fear of all who see its prosperity sapping the foundations of their class society. He died in 1865; and in 1867 his biography was published by Sir Theodore Martin, his collaborator. Martin's definition of Aytoun's place in literature is felicitous:—

> «Fashions in poetry may alter, but so long as the themes with which they deal have an interest for his countrymen, his ‘Lays’ will find, as they do now, a wide circle of admirers. His powers as a humorist were perhaps greater than as a poet. They have certainly been more widely appreciated. His immediate contemporaries owe him much, for he has contributed largely to that kindly mirth without which the strain and struggle of modern life would be intolerable. Much that is excellent in his humorous writings may very possibly cease to retain a place in literature from the circumstance that he deals with characters and peculiarities which are in some measure local,

and phases of life and feeling and literature which are more or less ephemeral. But much will certainly continue to be read and enjoyed by the sons and grandsons of those for whom it was originally written; and his name will be coupled with those of Wilson, Lockhart, Sydney Smith, Peacock, Jerrold, Mahony, and Hood, as that of a man gifted with humor as genuine and original as theirs, however opinions may vary as to the order of their relative merits.»

‹The Modern Endymion,› from which an extract is given, is a parody on Disraeli's earlier manner.

THE BURIAL MARCH OF DUNDEE

From the ‹Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers›

I

Sound the fife and cry the slogan;
Let the pibroch shake the air
With its wild, triumphant music,
Worthy of the freight we bear.
Let the ancient hills of Scotland
Hear once more the battle-song
Swell within their glens and valleys
As the clansmen march along!
Never from the field of combat,
Never from the deadly fray,
Was a nobler trophy carried
Than we bring with us to-day;
Never since the valiant Douglas
On his dauntless bosom bore
Good King Robert's heart — the priceless —
To our dear Redeemer's shore!
Lo! we bring with us the hero —
Lo! we bring the conquering Græme,
Crowned as best beseems a victor
From the altar of his fame;
Fresh and bleeding from the battle
Whence his spirit took its flight,
'Midst the crashing charge of squadrons,
And the thunder of the fight!
Strike, I say, the notes of triumph,
As we march o'er moor and lea!
Is there any here will venture
To bewail our dead Dundee?

Let the widows of the traitors
Weep until their eyes are dim!
Wail ye may full well for Scotland—
Let none dare to mourn for him!
See! above his glorious body
Lies the royal banner's fold—
See! his valiant blood is mingled
With its crimson and its gold.
See how calm he looks and stately,
Like a warrior on his shield,
Waiting till the flush of morning
Breaks along the battle-field!
See— oh, never more, my comrades,
Shall we see that falcon eye
Redden with its inward lightning,
As the hour of fight drew nigh!
Never shall we hear the voice that,
Clearer than the trumpet's call,
Bade us strike for king and country,
Bade us win the field, or fall!

II

On the heights of Killiecrankie
Yester-morn our army lay:
Slowly rose the mist in columns
From the river's broken way;
Hoarsely roared the swollen torrent,
And the Pass was wrapped in gloom,
When the clansmen rose together
From their lair amidst the broom.
Then we belted on our tartans,
And our bonnets down we drew,
As we felt our broadswords' edges,
And we proved them to be true;
And we prayed the prayer of soldiers,
And we cried the gathering-cry,
And we clasped the hands of kinsmen,
And we swore to do or die!
Then our leader rode before us,
On his war-horse black as night—
Well the Cameronian rebels
Knew that charger in the fight!—
And a cry of exultation
From the bearded warrior rose;

For we loved the house of Claver'se,
And we thought of good Montrose.
But he raised his hand for silence—
"Soldiers! I have sworn a vow;
Ere the evening star shall glisten
On Schehallion's lofty brow,
Either we shall rest in triumph,
Or another of the Græmes
Shall have died in battle-harness
For his country and King James!
Think upon the royal martyr—
Think of what his race endure—
Think on him whom butchers murdered
On the field of Magus Muir:*
By his sacred blood I charge ye,
By the ruined hearth and shrine—
By the blighted hopes of Scotland,
By your injuries and mine—
Strike this day as if the anvil
Lay beneath your blows the while,
Be they Covenanting traitors,
Or the blood of false Argyle!
Strike! and drive the trembling rebels
Backwards o'er the stormy Forth;
Let them tell their pale Convention
How they fared within the North.
Let them tell that Highland honor
Is not to be bought nor sold;
That we scorn their prince's anger,
As we loathe his foreign gold.
Strike! and when the fight is over,
If you look in vain for me,
Where the dead are lying thickest
Search for him that was Dundee!"

III

Loudly then the hills re-echoed
With our answer to his call,
But a deeper echo sounded
In the bosoms of us all.
For the lands of wide Breadalbane,
Not a man who heard him speak

---

* Archbishop Sharp, Lord Primate of Scotland.

Would that day have left the battle.
  Burning eye and flushing cheek
Told the clansmen's fierce emotion,
  And they harder drew their breath:
For their souls were strong within them,
  Stronger than the grasp of Death.
Soon we heard a challenge trumpet
  Sounding in the Pass below,
And the distant tramp of horses,
  And the voices of the foe;
Down we crouched amid the bracken,
  Till the Lowland ranks drew near,
Panting like the hounds in summer,
  When they scent the stately deer.
From the dark defile emerging,
  Next we saw the squadrons come,
Leslie's foot and Leven's troopers
  Marching to the tuck of drum;
Through the scattered wood of birches,
  O'er the broken ground and heath,
Wound the long battalion slowly,
  Till they gained the field beneath;
Then we bounded from our covert,—
  Judge how looked the Saxons then,
When they saw the rugged mountain
  Start to life with armèd men!
Like a tempest down the ridges
  Swept the hurricane of steel,
Rose the slogan of Macdonald—
  Flashed the broadsword of Lochiel!
Vainly sped the withering volley
  'Mongst the foremost of our band—
On we poured until we met them
  Foot to foot and hand to hand.
Horse and man went down like drift-wood
  When the floods are black at Yule,
And their carcasses are whirling
  In the Garry's deepest pool.
Horse and man went down before us—
  Living foe there tarried none
On the field of Killiecrankie,
  When that stubborn fight was done!

IV

And the evening star was shining
   On Schehallion's distant head,
When we wiped our bloody broadswords,
   And returned to count the dead.
There we found him gashed and gory,
   Stretched upon the cumbered plain,
As he told us where to seek him,
   In the thickest of the slain.
And a smile was on his visage,
   For within his dying ear
Pealed the joyful note of triumph
   And the clansmen's clamorous cheer:
So, amidst the battle's thunder,
   Shot, and steel, and scorching flame,
In the glory of his manhood
   Passed the spirit of the Græme!

V

Open wide the vaults of Athol,
   Where the bones of heroes rest—
Open wide the hallowed portals
   To receive another guest!
Last of Scots, and last of freemen—
   Last of all that dauntless race
Who would rather die unsullied,
   Than outlive the land's disgrace!
O thou lion-hearted warrior!
   Reck not of the after-time:
Honor may be deemed dishonor,
   Loyalty be called a crime.
Sleep in peace with kindred ashes
   Of the noble and the true,
Hands that never failed their country,
   Hearts that never baseness knew.
Sleep!—and till the latest trumpet
   Wakes the dead from earth and sea,
Scotland shall not boast a braver
   Chieftain than our own Dundee!

THE EXECUTION OF MONTROSE

From 'Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers'

Come hither, Evan Cameron!
Come, stand beside my knee —
I hear the river roaring down
Toward the wintry sea.
There's shouting on the mountain-side,
There's war within the blast —
Old faces look upon me,
Old forms go trooping past.
I hear the pibroch wailing
Amidst the din of fight,
And my dim spirit wakes again
Upon the verge of night.

'Twas I that led the Highland host
Through wild Lochaber's snows,
What time the plaided clans came down
To battle with Montrose.
I've told thee how the Southrons fell
Beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan
By Inverlochy's shore;
I've told thee how we swept Dundee,
And tamed the Lindsays' pride:
But never have I told thee yet
How the great Marquis died.

A traitor sold him to his foes; —
A deed of deathless shame!
I charge thee, boy, if e'er thou meet
With one of Assynt's name, —
Be it upon the mountain's side
Or yet within the glen,
Stand he in martial gear alone,
Or backed by armèd men, —
Face him, as thou wouldst face the man
Who wronged thy sire's renown;
Remember of what blood thou art,
And strike the caitiff down!

They brought him to the Watergate,
Hard bound with hempen span,
As though they held a lion there,
And not a fenceless man.

They set him high upon a cart,—
The hangman rode below,—
They drew his hands behind his back
And bared his noble brow.
Then, as a hound is slipped from leash,
They cheered, the common throng,
And blew the note with yell and shout,
And bade him pass along.

It would have made a brave man's heart
Grow sad and sick that day,
To watch the keen malignant eyes
Bent down on that array.
There stood the Whig West-country lords
In balcony and bow;
There sat their gaunt and withered dames,
And their daughters all arow.
And every open window
Was full as full might be
With black-robed Covenanting carles,
That goodly sport to see!

But when he came, though pale and wan,
He looked so great and high,
So noble was his manly front,
So calm his steadfast eye,—
The rabble rout forbore to shout,
And each man held his breath,
For well they knew the hero's soul
Was face to face with death.
And then a mournful shudder
Through all the people crept,
And some that came to scoff at him
Now turned aside and wept.

But onwards—always onwards,
In silence and in gloom,
The dreary pageant labored,
Till it reached the house of doom.
Then first a woman's voice was heard
In jeer and laughter loud,
And an angry cry and hiss arose
From the heart of the tossing crowd;
Then, as the Græme looked upwards,
He saw the ugly smile

Of him who sold his king for gold —
The master-fiend Argyle!

The Marquis gazed a moment,
And nothing did he say,
But the cheek of Argyle grew ghastly pale,
And he turned his eyes away.
The painted harlot by his side,
She shook through every limb,
For a roar like thunder swept the street,
And hands were clenched at him;
And a Saxon soldier cried aloud,
«Back, coward, from thy place!
For seven long years thou hast not dared
To look him in the face.»

Had I been there with sword in hand,
And fifty Camerons by,
That day through high Dunedin's streets
Had pealed the slogan-cry.
Not all their troops of trampling horse,
Nor might of mailèd men —
Not all the rebels in the South
Had borne us backward then!
Once more his foot on Highland heath
Had trod as free as air,
Or I, and all who bore my name,
Been laid around him there!

It might not be. They placed him next
Within the solemn hall,
Where once the Scottish kings were throned
Amidst their nobles all.
But there was dust of vulgar feet
On that polluted floor,
And perjured traitors filled the place
Where good men sate before.
With savage glee came Warriston
To read the murderous doom;
And then uprose the great Montrose
In the middle of the room.

«Now, by my faith as belted knight,
And by the name I bear,
And by the bright Saint Andrew's cross
That waves above us there, —

Yea, by a greater, mightier oath—
   And oh, that such should be!—
By that dark stream of royal blood
   That lies 'twixt you and me,—
I have not sought in battle-field
   A wreath of such renown,
Nor dared I hope on my dying day
   To win the martyr's crown.

«There is a chamber far away
   Where sleep the good and brave,
But a better place ye have named for me
   Than by my father's grave.
For truth and right, 'gainst treason's might,
   This hand hath always striven,
And ye raise it up for a witness still
   In the eye of earth and heaven.
Then nail my head on yonder tower—
   Give every town a limb—
And God who made shall gather them:
   I go from you to Him!»

The morning dawned full darkly,
   The rain came flashing down,
And the jagged streak of the levin-bolt
   Lit up the gloomy town.
The thunder crashed across the heaven,
   The fatal hour was come;
Yet aye broke in, with muffled beat,
   The larum of the drum.
There was madness on the earth below
   And anger in the sky,
And young and old, and rich and poor,
   Come forth to see him die.

Ah, God! that ghastly gibbet!
   How dismal 'tis to see
The great tall spectral skeleton,
   The ladder and the tree!
Hark! hark! it is the clash of arms—
   The bells begin to toll—
«He is coming! he is coming!
   God's mercy on his soul!»
One long last peal of thunder—
   The clouds are cleared away,

And the glorious sun once more looks down
   Amidst the dazzling day.

"He is coming! he is coming!"
   Like a bridegroom from his room,
Came the hero from his prison,
   To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
   There was lustre in his eye,
And he never walked to battle
   More proudly than to die;
There was color in his visage,
   Though the cheeks of all were wan,
And they marveled as they saw him pass,
   That great and goodly man!

He mounted up the scaffold,
   And he turned him to the crowd;
But they dared not trust the people,
   So he might not speak aloud.
But looked upon the heavens
   And they were clear and blue,
And in the liquid ether
   The eye of God shone through:
Yet a black and murky battlement
   Lay resting on the hill,
As though the thunder slept within —
   All else was calm and still.

The grim Geneva ministers
   With anxious scowl drew near,
As you have seen the ravens flock
   Around the dying deer.
He would not deign them word nor sign,
   But alone he bent the knee,
And veiled his face for Christ's dear grace
   Beneath the gallows-tree.
Then radiant and serene he rose,
   And cast his cloak away;
For he had ta'en his latest look
   Of earth and sun and day.

A beam of light fell o'er him,
   Like a glory round the shriven,
And he climbed the lofty ladder
   As it were the path to heaven.

Then came a flash from out the cloud,
And a stunning thunder-roll;
And no man dared to look aloft,
For fear was on every soul.
There was another heavy sound,
A hush and then a groan;
And darkness swept across the sky—
The work of death was done!

THE BROKEN PITCHER

From the ‹Bon Gaultier Ballads›

It was a Moorish maiden was sitting by a well,
And what that maiden thought of, I cannot, cannot tell,
When by there rode a valiant knight, from the town of Oviedo—
Alphonso Guzman was he hight, the Count of Desparedo.

«O maiden, Moorish maiden! why sitt'st thou by the spring?
Say, dost thou seek a lover, or any other thing?
Why gazest thou upon me, with eyes so large and wide,
And wherefore doth the pitcher lie broken by thy side?»

«I do not seek a lover, thou Christian knight so gay,
Because an article like that hath never come my way;
But why I gaze upon you, I cannot, cannot tell,
Except that in your iron hose you look uncommon swell.

«My pitcher it is broken, and this the reason is—
A shepherd came behind me, and tried to snatch a kiss;
I would not stand his nonsense, so ne'er a word I spoke,
But scored him on the costard, and so the jug was broke.

«My uncle, the Alcaydè, he waits for me at home,
And will not take his tumbler until Zorayda come.
I cannot bring him water,—the pitcher is in pieces;
And so I'm sure to catch it, 'cos he wallops all his nieces.

«O maiden, Moorish maiden! wilt thou be ruled by me?
So wipe thine eyes and rosy lips, and give me kisses three;
And I'll give thee my helmet, thou kind and courteous lady,
To carry home the water to thy uncle, the Alcaydè.»

He lighted down from off his steed—he tied him to a tree—
He bowed him to the maiden, and took his kisses three:
«To wrong thee, sweet Zorayda, I swear would be a sin!»
He knelt him at the fountain, and dipped his helmet in.

Up rose the Moorish maiden — behind the knight she steals,
And caught Alphonso Guzman up tightly by the heels;
She tipped him in, and held him down beneath the bubbling water, —
"Now, take thou that for venturing to kiss Al Hamet's daughter!"

A Christian maid is weeping in the town of Oviedo;
She waits the coming of her love, the Count of Desparedo.
I pray you all in charity, that you will never tell
How he met the Moorish maiden beside the lonely well.

SONNET TO BRITAIN

"BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON"

HALT! Shoulder arms! Recover! As you were!
Right wheel! Eyes left! Attention! Stand at ease!
O Britain! O my country! Words like these
Have made thy name a terror and a fear
To all the nations. Witness Ebro's banks,
Assaye, Toulouse, Nivelle, and Waterloo,
Where the grim despot muttered, *Sauve qui peut!*
And Ney fled darkling.—Silence in the ranks!
Inspired by these, amidst the iron crash
Of armies, in the centre of his troop
The soldier stands — unmovable, not rash —
Until the forces of the foemen droop;
Then knocks the Frenchmen to eternal smash,
Pounding them into mummy. Shoulder, hoop!

A BALL IN THE UPPER CIRCLES

From 'The Modern Endymion'

'TWAS a hot season in the skies. Sirius held the ascendant, and under his influence even the radiant band of the Celestials began to droop, while the great ball-room of Olympus grew gradually more and more deserted. For nearly a week had Orpheus, the leader of the heavenly orchestra, played to a deserted floor. The *élite* would no longer figure in the waltz. Juno obstinately kept her room, complaining of headache and ill-temper. Ceres, who had lately joined a dissenting congregation, objected generally to all frivolous amusements; and Minerva had established, in opposition, a series of literary soirées, at which Pluto nightly lectured on the fine arts and phrenology, to a brilliant and fashionable audience. The Muses, with Hebe and some of the younger deities, alone frequented the assemblies; but with all their attractions there was still a sad lack of partners. The younger gods had of late become remarkably dissipated, messed three times a week at least with Mars in the barracks, and seldom separated sober. Bacchus had been sent to Coventry by the ladies, for appearing one night in the ball-room, after a hard sederunt, so drunk that he measured his length upon the floor after a vain attempt at a mazurka; and they likewise eschewed the company of Pan, who had become an abandoned smoker, and always smelt infamously of cheroots. But the most serious defection, as also the most unaccountable, was that of the beautiful Diana, *par excellence* the belle of the season, and assuredly the most graceful nymph that ever tripped along the halls of heaven. She had gone off suddenly to the country, without alleging any intelligible excuse, and with her the last attraction of the ball-room seemed to have disappeared. Even Venus, the perpetual lady patroness, saw that the affair was desperate.

"Ganymede, *mon beau garcon*," said she, one evening at an unusually thin assembly, "we must really give it up at last. Matters are growing worse and worse, and in another week we shall positively not have enough to get up a tolerable gallopade. Look at these seven poor Muses sitting together on the sofa. Not a soul has spoken to them to-night, except that horrid Silenus, who dances nothing but Scotch reels."

"*Pardieu!*" replied the young Trojan, fixing his glass in his eye. "There may be a reason for that. The girls are decidedly *passées*, and most inveterate blues. But there's dear little Hebe, who never wants partners, though that clumsy Hercules insists upon his conjugal rights, and keeps moving after her like an enormous shadow. 'Pon my soul, I've a great mind— Do you think, *ma belle tante*, that anything might be done in that quarter?"

"Oh fie, Ganymede—fie for shame!" said Flora, who was sitting close to the Queen of Love, and overheard the conversation. "You horrid, naughty man, how can you talk so?"

«*Pardon, ma chère!*» replied the exquisite with a languid smile. «You must excuse my *badinage;* and indeed, a glance of your fair eyes were enough at any time to recall me to my senses. By the way, what a beautiful *bouquet* you have there. *Parole d'honneur*, I am quite jealous. May I ask who sent it?»

«What a goose you are!» said Flora, in evident confusion: «how should I know? Some general admirer like yourself, I suppose.»

«Apollo is remarkably fond of hyacinths, I believe,» said Ganymede, looking significantly at Venus. «Ah, well! I see how it is. We poor detrimentals must break our hearts in silence. It is clear we have no chance with the *preux chevalier* of heaven.»

«Really, Ganymede, you are very severe this evening,» said Venus with a smile; «but tell me, have you heard anything of Diana?»

«Ah! *la belle Diane?* They say she is living in the country somewhere about Caria, at a place they call Latmos Cottage, cultivating her faded roses—what a color Hebe has!—and studying the sentimental.»

«*Tant pis!* She is a great loss to us,» said Venus. «Apropos, you will be at Neptune's *fête champêtre* to-morrow, *n'est ce pas?* We shall then finally determine about abandoning the assemblies. But I must go home now. The carriage has been waiting this hour, and my doves may catch cold. I suppose that boy Cupid will not be home till all hours of the morning.»

«Why, I believe the Rainbow Club *does* meet to-night, after the dancing,» said Ganymede significantly. «This is the last oyster-night of the season.»

«Gracious goodness! The boy will be quite tipsy,» said Venus. «Do, dear Ganymede! try to keep him sober. But now, give me your arm to the cloak-room.»

«*Volontiers!*» said the exquisite.

As Venus rose to go, there was a rush of persons to the further end of the room, and the music ceased. Presently, two or three voices were heard calling for Æsculapius.

«What's the row?» asked that learned individual, advancing leisurely from the refreshment table, where he had been cramming himself with tea and cakes.

«Leda's fainted!» shrieked Calliope, who rushed past with her vinaigrette in hand.

"*Gammon!*" growled the Abernethy of heaven, as he followed her.

"Poor Leda!" said Venus, as her cavalier adjusted her shawl. "These fainting fits are decidedly alarming. I hope it is nothing more serious than the weather."

"I hope so, too," said Ganymede. "Let me put on the scarf. But people will talk. Pray heaven it be not a second edition of that old scandal about the eggs!"

"*Fi donc!* You odious creature! How can you? But after all, stranger things have happened. There now, have done. Good-night!" and she stepped into her chariot.

"*Bon soir*," said the exquisite, kissing his hand as it rolled away. "'Pon my soul, that's a splendid woman. I've a great mind— but there's no hurry about that. *Revenons à nos œufs.* I must learn something more about this fainting fit." So saying, Ganymede re-ascended the stairs.

A HIGHLAND TRAMP

From 'Norman Sinclair'

When summer came—for in Scotland, alas! there is no spring, winter rolling itself remorselessly, like a huge polar bear, over what should be the beds of the early flowers, and crushing them ere they develop—when summer came, and the trees put on their pale-green liveries, and the brakes were blue with the wood-hyacinth, and the ferns unfolded their curl, what ecstasy it was to steal an occasional holiday, and wander, rod in hand, by some quiet stream up in the moorlands, inhaling health from every breeze, nor seeking shelter from the gentle shower as it dropped its manna from the heavens! And then the long holidays, when the town was utterly deserted—how I enjoyed these, as they can only be enjoyed by the possessors of the double talisman of strength and youth! No more care—no more trouble—no more task-work—no thought even of the graver themes suggested by my later studies! Look—standing on the Calton Hill, behold yon blue range of mountains to the west—cannot you name each pinnacle from its form? Benledi, Benvoirlich, Benlomond! Oh, the beautiful land, the elysium that lies round the base of those distant giants! The forest of Glenfinlas, Loch Achray with its weeping birches, the grand defiles of the Trosachs, and Ellen's Isle, the pearl of the one lake that genius has forever hallowed! Up, sluggard! Place your knapsack on your back; but stow it not with unnecessary gear, for you have still further to go, and your rod also must be your companion, if you mean to penetrate the region beyond. Money? Little money suffices him who travels on foot, who can bring his own fare to the shepherd's bothy where he is to sleep, and who sleeps there better and sounder than the tourist who rolls from station to station in his barouche, grumbling because the hotels are overcrowded, and miserable about the airing of his sheets. Money? You would laugh if you heard me mention the sum which has sufficed for my expenditure during a long summer month; for the pedestrian, humble though he be, has his own especial privileges, and not the least of these is that he is exempted from all extortion. Donald—God bless him!—has a knack of putting on the prices; and when an English family comes posting up to the door of his inn, clamorously demanding every sort of accommodation which a metropolitan hotel could afford, grumbling at the lack of attendance, sneering at the quality of the food, and turning the whole establishment upside down for their own selfish gratification, he not unreasonably determines that the extra trouble shall be paid for in that gold which rarely crosses his fingers except during the short season when tourists and sportsmen abound. But Donald, who is descended from the M'Gregor, does not make spoil of the poor. The sketcher or the angler who come to his door, with the sweat upon their brow and the dust of the highway or the pollen of the heather on their feet, meet with a hearty welcome; and though the room in which their meals are served is but low in the roof, and the floor strewn with sand, and the attic wherein they lie is garnished with two beds and a shake-down, yet are the viands wholesome, the sheets clean, and the tariff so undeniably moderate that even parsimony cannot complain. So up in the morning early, so soon as the first beams of the sun slant into the chamber—down to the loch or river, and with a headlong plunge scrape acquaintance with the pebbles at the bottom; then rising with a hearty gasp, strike out for the islet or the further bank, to the astonishment of the otter, who, thief that he is, is skulking back to his hole below the old saugh-tree, from a midnight foray up the burns. Huzza! The mallard, dozing among the reeds, has taken fright, and tucking up his legs under his round fat rump, flies quacking to a remoter marsh.

«By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes,»

and lo! Dugald the keeper, on his way to the hill, is arrested by the aquatic phenomenon, and half believes that he is witnessing the frolics of an Urisk! Then make your toilet on the greensward, swing your knapsack over your shoulders, and cover ten good miles of road before you halt before breakfast with more than the appetite of an ogre.

In this way I made the circuit of well-nigh the whole of the Scottish Highlands, penetrating as far as Cape Wrath and the wild district of Edderachylis, nor leaving unvisited the grand scenery of Loch Corruisk, and the stormy peaks of Skye; and more than one delightful week did I spend each summer, exploring Gameshope, or the Linns of Talla, where the Covenanters of old held their gathering; or clambering up the steep ascent by the Grey Mare's Tail to lonely and lovely Loch Skene, or casting for trout in the silver waters of St. Mary's.

MASSIMO TAPARELLI D'AZEGLIO

(1798–1866)

Massimo Taparelli, Marquis d'Azeglio, like his greater colleague and sometime rival in the Sardinian Ministry, Cavour, wielded a graceful and forcible pen, and might have won no slight distinction in the peaceful paths of literature and art as well, had he not been before everything else a patriot. Of ancient and noble Piedmontese stock, he was born at Turin in October, 1798. In his fifteenth year the youth accompanied his father to Rome, where the latter had been appointed ambassador, and thus early he was inspired with the passion for painting and music which never left him. In accordance with the paternal wish he entered on a military career, but soon abandoned the service to devote himself to art. But after a residence of eight years (1821–29) in the papal capital, having acquired both skill and fame as a landscape painter, D'Azeglio began to direct his thoughts to letters and politics.

After the death of his father in 1830 he settled in Milan, where he formed the acquaintance of the poet and novelist Alessandro Manzoni, whose daughter he married, and under whose influence he became deeply interested in literature, especially in its relation to the political events of those stirring times. The agitation against Austrian domination was especially marked in the north of Italy, where Manzoni had made himself prominent; and so it came to pass that Massimo d'Azeglio plunged into literature with the ardent hope of stimulating the national sense of independence and unity.

In 1833 he published, not without misgivings, 'Ettore Fieramosca,' his first romance, in which he aimed to teach Italians how to fight for national honor. The work achieved an immediate and splendid success, and unquestionably served as a powerful aid to the awakening of Italy's ancient patriotism. It was followed in 1841 by 'Nicolo de' Lapi,' a story conceived in similar vein, with somewhat greater pretensions to literary finish. D'Azeglio now became known as one of the foremost representatives of the moderate party, and exerted the potent influence of his voice as well as of his pen in diffusing liberal propaganda. In 1846 he published the bold pamphlet 'Gli Ultimi Casi di Romagna' (On the Recent Events in Romagna), in which he showed the danger and utter futility of ill-advised republican outbreaks, and the paramount necessity of adopting thereafter a wiser and more practical policy to gain the great end desired. Numerous trenchant political articles issued from his pen during the next two years. The year 1849 found him a member of the first Sardinian parliament, and in March of that year Victor Emmanuel called him to the presidency of the Council with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. Obliged to give way three years later before the rising genius of Cavour, he served his country with distinction on several important diplomatic missions after the peace of Villafranca, and died in his native city on the 15th of January, 1866.

In 1867 appeared D'Azeglio's autobiography, 'I Miei Ricordi,' translated into English by Count Maffei under title of 'My Recollections,' which is undeniably the most interesting and thoroughly delightful product of his pen. «He was a 'character,'» said an English critic at the time: «a man of whims and oddities, of hobbies and crotchets. . . . This character of individuality, which impressed its stamp on his whole life, is charmingly revealed in every sentence of the memoirs which he has left behind him; so that, more than any of his previous writings, their mingled homeliness and wit and wisdom justify the epithet which I once before ventured to give him when I described him as 'the Giusti of Italian prose.'» As a polemic writer D'Azeglio was recognized as one of the chief forces in molding public opinion. If he had not been both patriot and statesman, this versatile genius, as before intimated, would not improbably have gained an enviable reputation in the realm of art; and although his few novels are — perhaps with justice — no longer remembered, they deeply stirred the hearts of his countrymen in their day, and to say the least are characterized by good sense, facility of execution, and a refined imaginative power.

A HAPPY CHILDHOOD

From 'My Recollections'

The distribution of our daily occupations was strictly laid down for Matilde and me in black and white, and these rules were not to be broken with impunity. We were thus accustomed to habits of order, and never to make anybody wait for our convenience; a fault which is one of the most troublesome that can be committed either by great people or small.

I remember one day that Matilde, having gone out with Teresa, came home when we had been at dinner some time. It was winter, and snow was falling. The two culprits sat down a little confused, and their soup was brought them in two plates, which had been kept hot; but can you guess where? On the balcony; so that the contents were not only below freezing-point, but actually had a thick covering of snow!

At dinner, of course my sister and I sat perfectly silent, waiting our turn, without right of petition or remonstrance. As to the other proprieties of behavior, such as neatness, and not being noisy or boisterous, we knew well that the slightest infraction would have entailed banishment for the rest of the day at least. Our great anxiety was to eclipse ourselves as much as possible; and I assure you that under this system we never fancied ourselves the central points of importance round which all the rest of the world was to revolve, — an idea which, thanks to absurd indulgence and flattery, is often forcibly thrust, I may say, into poor little brains, which if left to themselves would never have lost their natural simplicity.

The lessons of 'Galateo' were not enforced at dinner only. Even at other times we were forbidden to raise our voices or interrupt the conversation of our elders, still more to quarrel with each other. If sometimes as we went to dinner I rushed forward before Matilde, my father would take me by the arm and make me come last, saying, "There is no need to be uncivil because she is your sister." The old generation in many parts of Italy have the habit of shouting and raising their voices as if their interlocutor were deaf, interrupting him as if he had no right to speak, and poking him in the ribs and otherwise, as if he could only be convinced by sensations of bodily pain. The regulations observed in my family were therefore by no means superfluous; and would to Heaven they were universally adopted as the law of the land!

On another occasion my excellent mother gave me a lesson of humility, which I shall never forget any more than the place where I received it.

In the open part of the Cascine, which was once used as a race-course, to the right of the space where the carriages stand, there is a walk alongside the wood. I was walking there one day with my mother, followed by an old servant, a countryman of Pylades; less heroic than the latter, but a very good fellow too. I forget why, but I raised a little cane I had in my hand, and I am afraid I struck him. My mother, before all the passers-by, obliged me to kneel down and beg his pardon. I can still see poor Giacolin taking off his hat with a face of utter bewilderment, quite unable to comprehend how it was that the Chevalier Massimo Taparelli d'Azeglio came to be at his feet.

An indifference to bodily pain was another of the precepts most carefully instilled by our father; and as usual, the lesson was made more impressive by example whenever an opportunity presented itself. If, for instance, we complained of any slight pain or accident, our father used to say, half in fun, half in earnest, « When a Piedmontese has both his arms and legs broken, and has received two sword-thrusts in the body, he may be allowed to say, but not till then, ‹ Really, I almost think I am not quite well. › »

The moral authority he had acquired over me was so great that in no case would I have disobeyed him, even had he ordered me to jump out of window.

I recollect that when my first tooth was drawn, I was in an agony of fright as we went to the dentist; but outwardly I was brave enough, and tried to seem as indifferent as possible. On another occasion my childish courage and also my father's firmness were put to a more serious test. He had hired a house called the Villa Billi, which stands about half a mile from San Domenico di Fiesole, on the right winding up toward the hill. Only two years ago I visited the place, and found the same family of peasants still there, and my two old playmates, Nando and Sandro, — who had both become even greater fogies than myself, — and we had a hearty chat together about bygone times.

Whilst living at this villa, our father was accustomed to take us out for long walks, which were the subject of special regulations. We were strictly forbidden to ask, « Have we far to go? » — « What time is it? » or to say, « I am thirsty; I am hungry; I am tired: » but in everything else we had full liberty of speech and action. Returning from one of these excursions, we one day found ourselves below Castel di Poggio, a rugged stony path leading towards Vincigliata. In one hand I had a nosegay of wild flowers, gathered by the way, and in the other a stick, when I happened to stumble, and fell awkwardly. My father sprang forward to pick me up, and seeing that one arm pained me, he examined it and found that in fact the bone was broken below the elbow. All this time my eyes were fixed upon him, and I could see his countenance change, and assume such an expression of tenderness and anxiety that he no longer appeared to be the same man. He bound up my arm as well as he could, and we then continued our way homewards. After a few moments, during which my father had resumed his usual calmness, he said to me: —

« Listen, Mammolino: your mother is not well. If she knows you are hurt it will make her worse. You must be brave, my boy: to-morrow morning we will go to Florence, where all that is needful can be done for you; but this evening you must not show you are in pain. Do you understand? »

All this was said with his usual firmness and authority, but also with the greatest affection. I was only too glad to have so important and difficult a task intrusted to me. The whole evening I sat quietly in a corner, supporting my poor little broken arm as best I could, and my mother only thought me tired by the long walk, and had no suspicion of the truth.

The next day I was taken to Florence, and my arm was set; but to complete the cure I had to be sent to the Baths of Vinadio a few years afterward. Some people may, in this instance, think my father was cruel. I remember the fact as if it were but yesterday, and I am sure such an idea never for one minute entered my mind. The expression of ineffable tenderness which I had read in his eyes had so delighted me, it seemed so reasonable to avoid alarming my mother, that I looked on the hard task allotted me as a fine opportunity of displaying my courage. I did so because I had not been spoilt, and good principles had been early implanted within me: and now that I am an old man and have known the world, I bless the severity of my father; and I could wish every Italian child might have one like him, and derive more profit than I did, — in thirty years' time Italy would then be the first of nations.

Moreover, it is a fact that children are much more observant than is commonly supposed, and never regard as hostile a just but affectionate severity. I have always seen them disposed to prefer persons who keep them in order to those who constantly yield to their caprices; and soldiers are just the same in this respect.

The following is another example to prove that my father did not deserve to be called cruel: —

He thought it a bad practice to awaken children suddenly, or to let their sleep be abruptly disturbed. If we had to rise early for a journey, he would come to my bedside and softly hum a popular song, two lines of which still ring in my ears: —

«Chi vuol veder l'aurora
Lasci le molli piume.»

(He who the early dawn would view
Downy pillows must eschew.)

And by gradually raising his voice, he awoke me without the slightest start. In truth, with all his severity, Heaven knows how I loved him.

THE PRIESTHOOD

From ‹My Recollections›

My occupations in Rome were not entirely confined to the domains of poetry and imagination. It must not be forgotten that I was also a diplomatist; and in that capacity I had social as well as official duties to perform.

The Holy Alliance had accepted the confession and repentance of Murat, and had granted him absolution; but as the new convert inspired little confidence, he was closely watched, in the expectation — and perhaps the hope — of an opportunity of crowning the work by the infliction of penance.

The penance intended was to deprive him of his crown and sceptre, and to turn him out of the pale. Like all the other diplomatists resident in Rome, we kept our court well informed of all that could be known or surmised regarding the intentions of the Neapolitan government; and I had the lively occupation of copying page after page of incomprehensible cipher for the new-born archives of our legation. Such was my life at that time; and in spite of the cipher, I soon found it pleasant enough. Dinner-parties, balls, routs, and fashionable society did not then inspire me with the holy horror which now keeps me away from them. Having never before experienced or enjoyed anything of the kind, I was satisfied. But in the midst of my pleasure, our successor — Marquis San Saturnino — made his appearance, and we had to prepare for our departure. One consolation, however, remained. I had just then been appointed to the high rank of cornet in the crack dragoon regiment « Royal Piedmont. » I had never seen its uniform, but I cherished a vague hope of being destined by Fortune to wear a helmet; and the prospect of realizing this splendid dream of my infancy prevented me from regretting my Roman acquaintances overmuch.

The Society of Jesus had meanwhile been restored, and my brother was on the eve of taking the vows. He availed himself of the last days left him before that ceremony to sit for his portrait to the painter Landi. This is one of that artist's best works, who, poor man, cannot boast of many; and it now belongs to my nephew Emanuel.

The day of the ceremony at length arrived, and I accompanied my brother to the Convent of Monte Cavallo, where it was to take place.

The Jesuits at that time were all greatly rejoicing at the revival of their order; and as may be inferred, they were mostly old men, with only a few young novices among them.

We entered an oratory fragrant with the flowers adorning the altar, full of silver ornaments, holy images, and burning wax-lights, with half-closed windows and carefully drawn blinds; for it is a certain, although unexplained, fact that men are more devout in the dark than in the light, at night than in the daytime, and with their eyes closed rather than open. We were received by the General of the order, Father Panizzoni, a little old man bent double with age, his eyes encircled with red, half blind, and I believe almost in his dotage. He was shedding tears of joy, and we all maintained the pious and serious aspect suited to the occasion, until the time arrived for the novice to step forward, when, lo! Father Panizzoni advanced with open arms toward the place where I stood, mistaking me for my brother; a blunder which for a moment imperiled the solemnity of the assembly.

Had I yielded to the embrace of Father Panizzoni, it would have been a wonderful bargain both for him and me. But this was not the only invitation I then received to enter upon a sacerdotal career. Monsignor Morozzo, my great-uncle and god-father, then secretary to the bishops and regular monks, one day proposed that I should enter the Ecclesiastical Academy, and follow the career of the prelacy under his patronage. The idea seemed so absurd that I could not help laughing heartily, and the subject was never revived.

Had I accepted these overtures, I might in the lapse of time have long since been a cardinal, and perhaps even Pope. And if so, I should have drawn the world after me, as the shepherd entices a lamb with a lump of salt. It was very wrong in me to refuse. Doubtless the habit of expressing my opinion to every one, and on all occasions, would have led me into many difficulties. I must either have greatly changed, or a very few years would have seen an end of me.

We left Rome at last, in the middle of winter, in an open carriage, and traveling chiefly by night, as was my father's habit. While the horses are trotting on, I will sum up the impressions of Rome and the Roman world which I was carrying away. The clearest idea present to my mind was that the priests of Rome and their religion had very little in common with my father and Don Andreis, or with the religion professed by them and by the priests and the devout laity of Turin. I had not been able to detect the slightest trace of that which in the language of asceticism is called unction. I know not why, but that grave and downcast aspect, enlivened only by a few occasional flashes of ponderous clerical wit, the atmosphere depressing as the *plumbeus auster* of Horace, in which I had been brought up under the rule of my priest,—all seemed unknown at Rome. There I never met with a monsignore or a priest who did not step out with a pert and jaunty air, his head erect, showing off a well-made leg, and daintily attired in the garb of a clerical dandy. Their conversation turned upon every possible subject, and sometimes upon *quibusdam aliis*, to such a degree that it was evident my father was perpetually on thorns. I remember a certain prelate, whom I will not name, and whose conduct was, I believe, sufficiently free and easy, who at a dinner-party at a villa near Porta Pia related laughingly some matrimonial anecdotes, which I at that time did not fully understand. And I remember also my poor father's manifest distress, and his strenuous endeavors to change the conversation and direct it into a different channel.

The prelates and priests whom I used to meet in less orthodox companies than those frequented by my father seemed to me still more free and easy. Either in the present or in the past, in theory or in practice, with more or less or even no concealment, they all alike were sailing or had sailed on the sweet *fleuve du tendre.* For instance, I met one old canon bound to a venerable dame by a tie of many years' standing. I also met a young prelate with a pink-and-white complexion and eyes expressive of anything but holiness; he was a desperate votary of the fair sex, and swaggered about paying his homage right and left. Will it be believed, this gay apostle actually told me, without circumlocution, that in the monastery of Tor di Specchi there dwelt a young lady who was in love with me? I, who of course desired no better, took the hint instantly, and had her pointed out to me. Then began an interchange of silly messages, of languishing looks, and a hundred absurdities of the same kind; all cut short by the pair of post-horses which carried us out of the Porta del Popolo. . . .

The opinions of my father respecting the clergy and the Court of Rome were certainly narrow and prejudiced; but with his good sense it was impossible for him not to perceive what was manifest even to a blind man. During our journey he kept insinuating (without appearing, however, to attach much importance to it) that it was always advisable to speak with proper respect of a country where we had been well received, even if we had noticed a great many abuses and disorders. To a certain extent, this counsel was well worthy of attention. He was doubtless much grieved at the want of decency apparent in one section of that society, or, to use a modern expression, at its absence of respectability; but he consoled himself by thinking, like Abraham the Jew in the 'Decameron,' that no better proof can be given of the truth of the religion professed by Rome than the fact of its enduring in such hands.

This reasoning, however, is not quite conclusive; for if Boccaccio had had patience to wait another forty years, he would have learnt, first from John Huss, and then from Luther and his followers, that although in certain hands things may last a while, it is only till they are worn out. What Boccaccio and the Jew would say now if they came back, I do not venture to surmise.

MY FIRST VENTURE IN ROMANCE

From 'My Recollections'

While striving to acquire a good artistic position in my new residence, I had still continued to work at my 'Fieramosca,' which was now almost completed. Letters were at that time represented at Milan by Manzoni, Grossi, Torti, Pompeo Litta, etc. The memories of the period of Monti, Parini, Foscolo, Porta, Pellico, Verri, Beccaria, were still fresh; and however much the living literary and scientific men might be inclined to lead a secluded life, intrenched in their own houses, with the shyness of people who disliked much intercourse with the world, yet by a little tact those who wished for their company could overcome their reserve. As Manzoni's son-in-law, I found myself naturally brought into contact with them. I knew them all; but Grossi and I became particularly intimate, and our close and uninterrupted friendship lasted until the day of his but too premature death. I longed to show my work to him, and especially to Manzoni, and ask their advice; but fear this time, not artistic but literary, had again caught hold of me. Still, a resolve was necessary, and was taken at last. I disclosed my secret, imploring forbearance and advice, but no *indulgence.* I wanted the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I preferred the blame of a couple of trusted friends to that of the public. Both seemed to have expected something a great deal worse than what they heard, to judge by their startled but also approving countenances, when my novel was read to them. Manzoni remarked with a smile, "We literary men have a strange profession indeed—any one can take it up in a day. Here is Massimo: the whim of writing a novel seizes him, and upon my word he does not do badly, after all!"

This high approbation inspired me with leonine courage, and I set to work again in earnest, so that in 1833 the work was ready for publication. On thinking it over now, it strikes me that I was guilty of great impertinence in thus bringing out and publishing with undaunted assurance my little novel among all those literary big-wigs; I who had never done or written anything before. But it was successful; and this is an answer to every objection.

The day I carried my bundle of manuscript to San Pietro all' Orto, and, as Berni expresses it, —

"— ritrovato
Un che di stampar opere lavora,
Dissi, Stampami questa alla malora!"

(— having
Discovered one, a publisher by trade,
'Print me this book, bad luck to it!' I said.)

I was in a still greater funk than on the two previous occasions. But I had yet to experience the worst I ever felt in the whole course of my life, and that was on the day of publication; when I went out in the morning, and read my illustrious name placarded in large letters on the street walls! I felt blinded by a thousand sparks. Now indeed *alea jacta erat*, and my fleet was burnt to ashes.

This great fear of the public may, with good-will, be taken for modesty; but I hold that at bottom it is downright vanity. Of course I am speaking of people endowed with a sufficient dose of talent and common-sense; with fools, on the contrary, vanity takes the shape of impudent self-confidence. Hence all the daily published amount of nonsense; which would convey a strange idea of us to Europe, if it were not our good fortune that Italian is not much understood abroad. As regards our internal affairs, the two excesses are almost equally noxious. In Parliament, for instance, the first, those of the timidly vain genus, might give their opinion a little oftener with general advantage; while if the others, the impudently vain, were not always brawling, discussions would be more brief and rational, and public business better and more quickly dispatched. The same reflection applies to other branches — to journalism, literature, society, etc.; for vanity is the bad weed which chokes up our political field; and as it is a plant of hardy growth, blooming among us all the year round, it is just as well to be on our guard.

Timid vanity was terribly at work within me the day 'Fieramosca' was published. For the first twenty-four hours it was impossible to learn anything; for even the most zealous require at least a day to form some idea of a book. Next morning, on first going out, I encountered a friend of mine, a young fellow then and now a man of mature age, who has never had a suspicion of the cruel blow he unconsciously dealt me. I met him in Piazza San Fedele, where I lived; and after a few words, he said, « By the by, I hear you have published a novel. Well done! » and then talked away about something quite different with the utmost heedlessness. Not a drop of blood was left in my veins, and I said to myself, « Mercy on me! I am done for: not even a word is said about my poor 'Fieramosca!' » It seemed incredible that he, who belonged to a very numerous family, connected with the best society of the town, should have heard nothing, if the slightest notice had been taken of it. As he was besides an excellent fellow and a friend, it seemed equally incredible that if a word had been said and heard, he should not have repeated it to me. Therefore, it was a failure; the worst of failures, that of silence. With a bitter feeling at heart, I hardly knew where I went; but this feeling soon changed, and the bitterness was superseded by quite an opposite sensation.

'Fieramosca' succeeded, and succeeded so well that I felt *abasourdi*, as the French express it; indeed, I could say « Je n'aurais jamais cru être si fort savant. » My success went on in an increasing ratio: it passed from the papers and from the masculine half to the feminine half of society; it found its way to the studios and the stage. I became the vade-mecum of every prima-donna and tenor, the hidden treat of school-girls; I penetrated between the pillow and the mattress of college, boys, of the military academy cadet; and my apotheosis reached such a height that some newspapers asserted it to be Manzoni's work. It is superfluous to add that only the ignorant could entertain such an idea; those who were better informed would never have made such a blunder.

My aim, as I said, was to take the initiative in the slow work of the regeneration of national character. I had no wish but to awaken high and noble sentiments in Italian hearts; and if all the literary men in the world had assembled to condemn me in virtue of strict rules, I should not have cared a jot, if, in defiance of all existing rules, I succeeded in inflaming the heart of one single individual. And I will also add, who can say that what causes durable emotion is unorthodox? It may be at variance with some rules and in harmony with others; and those which move hearts and captivate intellects do not appear to me to be the worst.

BABER

(1482–1530)

BY EDWARD S. HOLDEN

The emperor Baber was sixth in descent from Tamerlane, who died in 1405. Tamerlane's conquests were world-wide, but they never formed a homogeneous empire. Even in his lifetime he parceled them out to sons and grandsons. Half a century later Trans-oxiana was divided into many independent kingdoms each governed by a descendant of the great conqueror.

When Baber was born (1482), an uncle was King of Samarkand and Bokhara; another uncle ruled Badakhshan; another was King of Kabul. A relative was the powerful King of Khorasan. These princes were of the family of Tamerlane, as was Baber's father,—Sultan Omer Sheikh Mirza,—who was the King of Ferghana. Two of Baber's maternal uncles, descendants of Chengiz Khan, ruled the Moghul tribes to the west and north of Ferghana; and two of their sisters had married the Kings of Samarkand and Badakhshan. The third sister was Baber's mother, wife of the King of Ferghana.

The capitals of their countries were cities like Samarkand, Bokhara, and Herat. Tamerlane's grandson—Ulugh Beg—built at Samarkand the chief astronomical observatory of the world, a century and a half before Tycho Brahe (1576) erected Uranibourg in Denmark. The town was filled with noble buildings,—mosques, tombs, and colleges. Its walls were five miles in circumference.*

Its streets were paved (the streets of Paris were not paved till the time of Henri IV.), and running water was distributed in pipes. Its markets overflowed with fruits. Its cooks and bakers were noted for their skill. Its colleges were full of learned men, poets,† and doctors of the law. The observatory counted more than a hundred observers and calculators in its corps of astronomers. The products of China, of India, and of Persia flowed to the bazaars.

Bokhara has always been the home of learning. Herat was at that time the most magnificent and refined city of the world.‡ The court was splendid, polite, intelligent, and liberal. Poetry, history, philosophy, science, and the arts of painting and music were cultivated by noblemen and scholars alike. Baber himself was a poet of no mean rank. The religion was that of Islam, and the sect the orthodox Sunni; but the practice was less precise than in Arabia. Wine was drunk; poetry was prized; artists were encouraged. The mother-language of Baber was Turki (of which the Turkish of Constantinople is a dialect). Arabic was the language of science and of theology. Persian was the accepted literary language, though Baber's verses are in Turki as well.

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*Paris was walled in 1358; so Froissart tells us.

† «In Samarkand, the Odes of Baiesanghar Mirza are so popular, that there is not a house in which a copy of them may not be found.»—Baber's ‹Memoirs.›

‡ Baber spent twenty days in visiting its various palaces, towers, mosques, gardens, colleges—and gives a list of more than fifty such sights.

We possess Baber's ‹Memoirs› in the original Turki and in Persian translations also. In what follows, the extracts will be taken from Erskine's translation,* which preserves their direct and manly charm.

To understand them, the foregoing slight introduction is necessary. A connected sketch of Baber's life and a brief history of his conquests can be found in ‹The Mogul Emperors of Hindustan.›† We are here more especially concerned with his literary work. To comprehend it, something of his history and surroundings must be known.

FROM BABER'S ‹MEMOIRS›

In the month of Ramzan, in the year 899 [A. D. 1494], and in the twelfth year of my age, I became King of Ferghana.

The country of Ferghana is situated in the fifth climate, on the extreme boundary of the habitable world. On the east it has Kashgar; on the west, Samarkand; on the south, the hill country; on the north, in former times there were cities, yet at the present time, in consequence of the incursions of the Usbeks, no population remains. Ferghana is a country of small extent, abounding in grain and fruits. The revenues may suffice, without oppressing the country, to maintain three or four thousand troops.

My father, Omer Sheikh Mirza, was of low stature, had a short, bushy beard, brownish hair, and was very corpulent. As for his opinions and habits, he was of the sect of Hanifah, and strict in his belief. He never neglected the five regular and stated prayers. He read elegantly, and he was particularly fond of reading the ‹Shahnameh.›‡ Though he had a turn for poetry, he did not cultivate it. He was so strictly just, that when the caravan from [China] had once reached the hill country to the east of Ardejan, and the snow fell so deep as to bury it, so that of the whole only two persons escaped; he no sooner received information of the occurrence than he dispatched overseers to take charge of all the property, and he placed it under guard and preserved it untouched, till in the course of one or two years, the heirs coming from Khorasan, he delivered back the goods safe into their hands. His generosity was large, and so was his whole soul; he was of an excellent temper, affable, eloquent, and sweet in his conversation, yet brave withal and manly.

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* ‹Memoirs of Baber, Emperor of Hindustan, written by himself, and translated by Leyden and Erskine,› etc. London, 1826, quarto.

† By Edward S. Holden, New York, 1895, 8vo, illustrated.

‡ The ‹Book of Kings,› by the Persian poet Firdausi.

The early portion of Baber's 'Memoirs' is given to portraits of the officers of his court and country. A few of these may be quoted.

Khosrou Shah, though a Turk, applied his attention to the mode of raising his revenues, and he spent them liberally. At the death of Sultan Mahmud Mirza, he reached the highest pitch of greatness, and his retainers rose to the number of twenty thousand. Though he prayed regularly and abstained from forbidden foods, yet he was black-hearted and vicious, of mean understanding and slender talents, faithless and a traitor. For the sake of the short and fleeting pomp of this vain world, he put out the eyes of one and murdered another of the sons of the benefactor in whose service he had been, and by whom he had been protected; rendering himself accursed of God, abhorred of men, and worthy of execration and shame till the day of final retribution. These crimes he perpetrated merely to secure the enjoyment of some poor worldly vanities; yet with all the power of his many and populous territories, in spite of his magazines of warlike stores, he had not the spirit to face a barnyard chicken. He will often be mentioned in these memoirs.

Ali Shir Beg was celebrated for the elegance of his manners; and this elegance and polish were ascribed to the conscious pride of high fortune: but this was not the case; they were natural to him. Indeed, Ali Shir Beg was an incomparable person. From the time that poetry was first written in the Turki language, no man has written so much and so well. He has also left excellent pieces of music; they are excellent both as to the airs themselves and as to the preludes. There is not upon record in history any man who was a greater patron and protector of men of talent than he. He had no son nor daughter, nor wife nor family; he passed through the world single and unincumbered.

Another poet was Sheikhem Beg. He composed a sort of verses, in which both the words and the sense are terrifying and correspond with each other. The following is one of his couplets: —

During my sorrows of the night, the whirlpool of my sighs bears
the firmament from its place;
The dragons of the inundations of my tears bear down the four
quarters of the habitable world!

It is well known that on one occasion, having repeated these verses to Moulana Abdal Rahman Jami, the Mulla said, "Are you repeating poetry, or are you terrifying folks?"

A good many men who wrote verses happened to be present. During the party the following verse of Muhammed Salikh was repeated: —

What can one do to regulate his thoughts, with a mistress possessed
of every blandishment?
Where you *are, how is it possible for our thoughts to wander to*
another?

It was agreed that every one should make an extempore couplet to the same rhyme and measure. Every one accordingly repeated his verse. As we had been very merry, I repeated the following extempore satirical verses: —

What can one do with a drunken sot like you?
What can be done with one foolish as a she-ass?

Before this, whatever had come into my head, good or bad, I had always committed it to writing. On the present occasion, when I had composed these lines, my mind led me to reflections, and my heart was struck with regret that a tongue which could repeat the sublimest productions should bestow any trouble on such unworthy verses; that it was melancholy that a heart elevated to nobler conceptions should submit to occupy itself with these meaner and despicable fancies. From that time forward I religiously abstained from satirical poetry. I had not then formed my resolution, nor considered how objectionable the practice was.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE YEAR 904 [A. D. 1498–99]

Having failed in repeated expeditions against Samarkand and Ardejan, I once more returned to Khojend. Khojend is but a small place; and it is difficult for one to support two hundred retainers in it. How then could a [young] man, ambitious of empire, set himself down contentedly in so insignificant a place? As soon as I received advice that the garrison of Ardejan had declared for me, I made no delay. And thus, by the grace of the Most High, I recovered my paternal kingdom, of which I had been deprived nearly two years. An order was issued that such as had accompanied me in my campaigns might resume possession of whatever part of their property they recognized. Although the order seemed reasonable and just in itself, yet it was issued with too much precipitation. It was a senseless thing to exasperate so many men with arms in their hands. In war and in affairs of state, though things may appear just and reasonable at first sight, no matter ought to be finally decided without being well weighed and considered in a hundred different lights. From my issuing this single order without sufficient foresight, what commotions and mutinies arose! This inconsiderate order of mine was in reality the ultimate cause of my being a second time expelled from Ardejan.

Baber's next campaign was most arduous, but in passing by a spring he had the leisure to have these verses of Saadi inscribed on its brink:—

I have heard that the exalted Jemshid
Inscribed on a stone beside a fountain:—
"*Many a man like us has rested by this fountain,*
And disappeared in the twinkling of an eye.
Should we conquer the whole world by our manhood and strength,
Yet could we not carry it with us to the grave."

Of another fountain he says:—"I directed this fountain to be built round with stone, and formed a cistern. At the time when the *Arghwan* flowers begin to blow, I do not know that any place in the world is to be compared to it." On its sides he engraved these verses:—

Sweet is the return of the new year;
Sweet is the smiling spring;
Sweet is the juice of the mellow grape;
Sweeter far the voice of love.
Strive, O Baber! to secure the joys of life,
Which, alas! once departed, never more return.

From these flowers Baber and his army marched into the passes of the high mountains.

His narrative goes on:—

> It was at this time that I composed the following verses:—
>
> *There is no violence or injury of fortune that I have not experienced;*
> *This broken heart has endured them all. Alas! is there one left that I have not encountered?*
>
> For about a week we continued pressing down the snow without being able to advance more than two or three miles. I myself assisted in trampling down the snow. Every step we sank up to the middle or the breast, but we still went on, trampling it down. As the strength of the person who went first was generally exhausted after he had advanced a few paces, he stood still, while another took his place. The ten, fifteen, or twenty people who worked in trampling down the snow, next succeeded in dragging on a horse without a rider. Drawing this horse aside, we brought on another, and in this way ten, fifteen, or twenty of us contrived to bring forward the horses of all our number. The rest of the troops, even our best men, advanced along the road that had been beaten for them, hanging their heads. This was no time for plaguing them or employing authority. Every man who possesses spirit or emulation hastens to such works of himself. Continuing to advance by a track which we beat in the snow in this manner, we reached a cave at the foot of the Zirrin pass. That day the storm of wind was dreadful. The snow fell in such quantities that we all expected to meet death together. The cave seemed to be small. I took a hoe and made for myself at the mouth of the cave a resting-place about the size of a prayer-carpet. I dug down in the snow as deep as my breast, and yet did not reach the ground. This hole afforded me some shelter from the wind, and I sat down in it. Some desired me to go into the cavern, but I would not go. I felt that for me to be in a warm dwelling, while my men were in the midst of snow and drift,—for me to be within, enjoying sleep and ease, while my followers were in trouble and distress,—would be inconsistent with what I owed them, and a deviation from that society in suffering which was their due. I continued, therefore, to sit in the drift.

Ambition admits not of inaction;
The world is his who exerts himself;
In wisdom's eye, every condition
May find repose save royalty alone.

By leadership like this, the descendant of Tamerlane became the ruler of Kabul. He celebrates its charms in verse:—

Its verdure and flowers render Kabul, in spring, a heaven,—

but this kingdom was too small for a man of Baber's stamp. He used it as a stepping-stone to the conquest of India (1526).

Return a hundred thanks, O Baber! for the bounty of the merciful God
Has given you Sind, Hind, and numerous kingdoms;
If, unable to stand the heat, you long for cold,
You have only to recollect the frost and cold of Ghaznī.

In spite of these verses, Baber did not love India, and his monarchy was an exile to him. Let the last extract from his memoirs be a part of a letter written in 1529 to an old and trusted friend in Kabul. It is an outpouring of the griefs of his inmost heart to his friend. He says:—

My solicitude to visit my western dominions (Kabul) is boundless and great beyond expression. I trust in Almighty Allah that the time is near at hand when everything will be completely settled in this country. As soon as matters are brought to that state, I shall, with the permission of Allah, set out for your quarters without a moment's delay. How is it possible that the delights of those lands should ever be erased from the heart? How is it possible to forget the delicious melons and grapes of that pleasant region? They very recently brought me a single muskmelon from Kabul. While cutting it up, I felt myself affected with a strong feeling of loneliness and a sense of my exile from my native country, and I could not help shedding tears. [He gives long instructions on the military and political matters to be attended to, and continues without a break:—] At the southwest of Besteh I formed a plantation of trees; and as the prospect from it was very fine, I called it Nazergah [the view]. You must there plant some beautiful trees, and all around sow beautiful and sweet-smelling flowers and shrubs. [And he goes straight on:—] Syed Kasim will accompany the artillery. [After more details of the government he quotes fondly a little trivial incident of former days and friends, and says:—] Do not think amiss of me for deviating into these fooleries. I conclude with every good wish.

The ‹Memoirs› of Baber deserve a place beside the writings of the greatest of generals and conquerors. He is not unworthy to be classed with Cæsar as a general and as a man of letters. His character was more human, more frank, more lovable, more ardent. His fellow in our western world is not Cæsar, but Henri IV. of France and Navarre.

Edward S. Holden

BABRIUS

(First Century A. D.)

Babrius, also referred to as Babrias and Gabrias, was the writer of that metrical version of the folk-fables, commonly referred to Æsop, which delights our childhood. Until the time of Richard Bentley he was commonly thought of merely as a fabulist whose remains had been preserved by a few grammarians. Bentley, in the first draft (1697) of the part of his famous ‹Dissertation› treating of the fables of Æsop, speaks thus of Babrius, and goes not far out of his way to give a rap at Planudes, a late Greek, who turned works of Ovid, Cato, and Cæsar into Greek:—

«. . . came one Babrius, that gave a new turn of the fables into choliambics. Nobody that I know of mentions him but Suidas, Avienus, and Tzetzes. There's one Gabrias, indeed, yet extant, that has comprised each fable in four sorry iambics. But our Babrius is a writer of another size and quality; and were his book now extant, it might justly be opposed, if not preferred, to the Latin of Phædrus. There's a whole fable of his yet preserved at the end of Gabrias, of ‹The Swallow and the Nightingale.› Suidas brings many citations out of him, all which show him an excellent poet. . . . There are two parcels of the present fables; the one, which are the more ancient, one hundred and thirty-six in number, were first published out of the Heidelberg Library by Neveletus, 1610. The editor himself well observed that they were falsely ascribed to Æsop, because they mention holy monks. To which I will add another remark,—that there is a sentence out of Job. . . . Thus I have proved one-half of the fables now extant that carry the name of Æsop to be above a thousand years more recent than he. And the other half, that were public before Neveletus, will be found yet more modern, and the latest of all. . . . . This collection, therefore, is more recent than that other; and, coming first abroad with Æsop's ‹Life,› written by Planudes, 'tis justly believed to be owing to the same writer. That idiot of a monk has given us a book which he calls ‹The Life of Æsop,› that perhaps cannot be matched in any language for ignorance and nonsense. He had picked up two or three true stories, — that Æsop was a slave to a Xanthus, carried a burthen of bread, conversed with Crœsus, and was put to death at Delphi; but the circumstances of these and all his other tales are pure invention. . . . But of all his injuries to Æsop, that which can least be forgiven him is the making such a monster of him for ugliness, — an abuse that has found credit so universally that all the modern painters since the time of Planudes have drawn him in the worst shapes and features that fancy could invent. 'Twas an old tradition among the Greeks that Æsop revived again and lived a second life. Should he revive once more and see the picture before the book that carries his name, could he think it drawn for himself? — or for the monkey, or some strange beast introduced in the ‹Fables›? But what revelation had this monk about Æsop's deformity? For he must have it by dream or vision, and not by ordinary methods of knowledge. He lived about two thousand years after him, and in all that tract of time there's not a single author that has given the least hint that Æsop was ugly.»

Thus Bentley; but to return to Babrius. Tyrwhitt, in 1776, followed this calculation of Bentley by collecting the remains of Babrius. A publication in 1809 of fables from a Florentine manuscript foreran the collection (1832) of all the fables which could be entirely restored. In 1835 a German scholar, Knoch, published whatever had up to that time been written on Babrius, or as far as then known by him. So much had been accomplished by modern scholarship. The calculation was not unlike the mathematical computation that a star should, from an apparent disturbance, be in a certain quarter of the heavens at a certain time. The manuscript of Babrius, it became clear, must have existed. In 1842 M. Mynas, a Greek, who had already discovered the ‹Philosophoumena› of Hippolytus, came upon the parchment in the convent of St. Lama on Mount Athos. He was employed by the French government, and the duty of giving the new ancient to the world fell to French scholars. The date of the manuscript they referred to the tenth century. There were contained in it one hundred and twenty-three of the supposed one hundred and sixty fables, the arrangement being alphabetical and ending with the letter O. Again, in 1857 M. Mynas announced another discovery. Ninety-four fables and a procemium were still in a convent at Mount Athos; but the monks, who made difficulty about parting with the first parchment, refused to let the second go abroad. M. Mynas forwarded a transcript which he sold to the British Museum. It was after examination pronounced to be the work of a forger, and not even what it purported to be — the tinkering of a writer who had turned the original of Babrius into barbarous Greek and halting metre. Suggestions were made that the forger was Mynas himself. And there were scholars who accounted the manuscript as genuine.

The discovery of the first part added substantially to the remains which we have of the poetry of ancient Greece. The terseness, simplicity, and humor of the poems belong to the popular classic all the world over, in whatever tongue it appears; and the purity of the Greek shows that Babrius lived at a time when the influence of the classical age was still vital. He is placed at various times. Bergk fixes him so far back as B. C. 250, while others place him at the same number of years in our own era. Both French and German criticism has claimed that he was a Roman. There is no trace of his fables earlier than the Emperor Julian, and no metrical version of the Æsopean fables existed before the writing of Babrius. Socrates tried his hand at a version or two. But when such Greek writers as Xenophon and Aristotle refer to old folk-tales and legends, it is always in their own words. His fables are written in choliambic verse; that is, imperfect iambic which has a spondee in the last foot and is fitted for the satire for which it was originally used.

The fables of Babrius have been edited, with an interesting and valuable introduction, by W. G. Rutherford (1883), and by F. G. Schneidewin (1880). They have been turned into English metre by James Davies, M. A. (1860). The reader is also referred to the article 'Æsop' in the present work.

THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN

Betwixt the North wind and the Sun arose
A contest, which would soonest of his clothes
Strip a wayfaring clown, so runs the tale.
First, Boreas blows an almost Thracian gale,
Thinking, perforce, to steal the man's capote:
He loosed it not; but as the cold wind smote
More sharply, tighter round him drew the folds,
And sheltered by a crag his station holds.
But now the Sun at first peered gently forth,
And thawed the chills of the uncanny North;
Then in their turn his beams more amply plied,
Till sudden heat the clown's endurance tried;
Stripping himself, away his cloak he flung:
The Sun from Boreas thus a triumph wrung.

The fable means, «My son, at mildness aim:
Persuasion more results than force may claim.»

JUPITER AND THE MONKEY

A BABY-SHOW with prizes Jove decreed
For all the beasts, and gave the choice due heed.
A monkey-mother came among the rest;
A naked, snub-nosed pug upon her breast
She bore, in mother's fashion. At the sight
Assembled gods were moved to laugh outright.
Said she, «Jove knoweth where his prize will fall!
I know my child's the beauty of them all.»

THIS fable will a general law attest,
That each one deems that what's his own, is best.

THE MOUSE THAT FELL INTO THE POT

A MOUSE into a lidless broth-pot fell;
Choked with the grease, and bidding life farewell,
He said, «My fill of meat and drink have I
And all good things: 'Tis time that I should die.»

THOU art that dainty mouse among mankind,
If hurtful sweets are not by thee declined.

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

THERE hung some bunches of the purple grape
On a hillside. A cunning fox, agape
For these full clusters, many times essayed
To cull their dark bloom, many vain leaps made.
They were quite ripe, and for the vintage fit;
But when his leaps did not avail a whit,
He journeyed on, and thus his grief composed:—
«The bunch was sour, not ripe, as I supposed.»

THE CARTER AND HERCULES

A CARTER from the village drove his wain:
And when it fell into a rugged lane,
Inactive stood, nor lent a helping hand;
But to that god, whom of the heavenly band
He really honored most, Alcides, prayed:
«Push at your wheels,» the god appearing said,
«And goad your team; but when you pray again,
Help yourself likewise, or you'll pray in vain.»

THE YOUNG COCKS

Two Tanagræan cocks a fight began;
Their spirit is, 'tis said, as that of man:
Of these the beaten bird, a mass of blows,
For shame into a corner creeping goes;
The other to the housetop quickly flew,
And there in triumph flapped his wings and crew.
But him an eagle lifted from the roof,
And bore away. His fellow gained a proof
That oft the wages of defeat are best,—
None else remained the hens to interest.

Wherefore, O man, beware of boastfulness:
Should fortune lift thee, others to depress,
Many are saved by lack of her caress.

THE ARAB AND THE CAMEL

An Arab, having heaped his camel's back,
Asked if he chose to take the upward track
Or downward; and the beast had sense to say
«Am I cut off then from the level way?»

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE SWALLOW

Far from men's fields the swallow forth had flown,
When she espied amid the woodlands lone
The nightingale, sweet songstress. Her lament
Was Itys to his doom untimely sent.
Each knew the other through the mournful strain,
Flew to embrace, and in sweet talk remain.
Then said the swallow, «Dearest, liv'st thou still?
Ne'er have I seen thee, since thy Thracian ill.
Some cruel fate hath ever come between;
Our virgin lives till now apart have been.
Come to the fields; revisit homes of men;
Come dwell with me, a comrade dear, again,
Where thou shalt charm the swains, no savage brood:
Dwell near men's haunts, and quit the open wood:
One roof, one chamber, sure, can house the two,
Or dost prefer the nightly frozen dew,
And day-god's heat? a wild-wood life and drear?

Come, clever songstress, to the light more near.»
To whom the sweet-voiced nightingale replied:—
«Still on these lonesome ridges let me bide;
Nor seek to part me from the mountain glen:—
I shun, since Athens, man, and haunts of men;
To mix with them, their dwelling-place to view,
Stirs up old grief, and opens woes anew.»

Some consolation for an evil lot
Lies in wise words, in song, in crowds forgot.
But sore the pang, when, where you once were great,
Again men see you, housed in mean estate.

THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE STORK

Thin nets a farmer o'er his furrows spread,
And caught the cranes that on his tillage fed;
And him a limping stork began to pray,
Who fell with them into the farmer's way:—
«I am no crane: I don't consume the grain:
That I'm a stork is from my color plain;
A stork, than which no better bird doth live;
I to my father aid and succor give.»
The man replied:—«Good stork, I cannot tell
Your way of life: but this I know full well,
I caught you with the spoilers of my seed;
With them, with whom I found you, you must bleed.»

Walk with the bad, and hate will be as strong
'Gainst you as them, e'en though you no man wrong.

THE PINE

Some woodmen, bent a forest pine to split,
Into each fissure sundry wedges fit,
To keep the void and render work more light.
Out groaned the pine, «Why should I vent my spite
Against the axe which never touched my root,
So much as these cursed wedges, mine own fruit;
Which rend me through, inserted here and there!»

A fable this, intended to declare
That not so dreadful is a stranger's blow
As wrongs which men receive from those they know.

THE WOMAN AND HER MAID-SERVANTS

A VERY careful dame, of busy way,
Kept maids at home, and these, ere break of day,
She used to raise as early as cock-crow.
They thought 'twas hard to be awakened so,
And o'er wool-spinning be at work so long;
Hence grew within them all a purpose strong
To kill the house-cock, whom they thought to blame
For all their wrongs. But no advantage came;
Worse treatment than the former them befell:
For when the hour their mistress could not tell
At which by night the cock was wont to crow,
She roused them earlier, to their work to go.
A harder lot the wretched maids endured.

BAD judgment oft hath such results procured.

THE LAMP

A LAMP that swam with oil, began to boast
At eve, that it outshone the starry host,
And gave more light to all. Her boast was heard:
Soon the wind whistled; soon the breezes stirred,
And quenched its light. A man rekindled it,
And said, «Brief is the faint lamp's boasting fit,
But the starlight ne'er needs to be re-lit.»

THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

TO THE shy hare the tortoise smiling spoke,
When he about her feet began to joke:
«I'll pass thee by, though fleeter than the gale.»
«Pooh!» said the hare, «I don't believe thy tale.
Try but one course, and thou my speed shalt know.»
«Who'll fix the prize, and whither we shall go?»
Of the fleet-footed hare the tortoise asked.
To whom he answered, «Reynard shall be tasked
With this; that subtle fox, whom thou dost see.»
The tortoise then (no hesitater she!)
Kept jogging on, but earliest reached the post;
The hare, relying on his fleetness, lost
Space, during sleep, he thought he could recover
When he awoke. But then the race was over;
The tortoise gained her aim, and slept *her* sleep.

FROM negligence doth care the vantage reap.

FRANCIS BACON

(1561–1626)

BY CHARLTON T. LEWIS

The startling contrasts of splendor and humiliation which marked the life of Bacon, and the seemingly incredible inconsistencies which hasty observers find in his character, have been the themes of much rhetorical declamation, and even of serious and learned debate. From Ben Jonson in his own day, to James Spedding the friend of Tennyson, he has not lacked eminent eulogists, who look up to him as not only the greatest and wisest, but as among the noblest and most worthy of mankind: while the famous epigram of Pope, expanded by Macaulay into a stately and eloquent essay, has impressed on the popular mind the lowest estimate of his moral nature; and even such careful scholars as Charles de Rémusat and Dean Church, who have devoted careful and instructive volumes to the survey of Bacon's career and works, insist that with all his intellectual supremacy, he was a servile courtier, a false friend, and a corrupt judge. Yet there are few important names in human history of men who have left us so complete materials for a just judgment of their conduct; and it is only a lover of paradox who can read these and still regard Bacon's character as an unsolved problem.

Mr. Spedding has given a long life of intelligent labor to the collection of every fact and document throwing light upon the motives, aims, and thoughts of the great «Chancellor of Nature,» from the cradle to the grave. The results are before us in the seven volumes of 'The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon,' which form perhaps the most complete biography ever written. It is a book of absolute candor as well as infinite research, giving with equal distinctness all the evidence which makes for its hero's dishonor and that which tends to justify the writer's reverence for him. Another work by Mr. Spedding, 'Evenings with a Reviewer,' in two volumes, is an elaborate refutation, from the original and authentic records, of the most damning charges brought by Lord Macaulay against Bacon's good fame. It is a complete and overwhelming exposure of false coloring, of rhetorical artifices, and of the abuse of evidence, in the famous essay. As one of the most entertaining and instructive pieces of controversy in our literature, it deserves to be widely read. The unbiased reader cannot accept the special pleading by which, in his comments, Spedding makes every failing of Bacon «lean to virtue's side»; but will form upon the unquestioned facts presented a clear conception of him, will come to know him as no other man of an age so remote is known, and will find in his many-sided and magnificent nature a full explanation of the impressions which partial views of it have made upon his worshipers and his detractors.

It is only in his maturity, indeed, that we are privileged to enter into his mind and read his heart. But enough is known of the formative period of his life to show us the sources of his weaknesses and of his strength. The child whom high authorities have regarded as endowed with the mightiest intellect of the human race was born at York House, on the Strand, in the third year of Elizabeth's reign, January 22d, 1561. He was the son of the Queen's Lord Keeper of the Seals, Sir Nicholas Bacon, and his second wife Anne, daughter of Sir Anthony Cook, formerly tutor of King Edward VI. Mildred, an elder daughter of the same scholar, was the wife of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, who for the first forty years of her reign was Elizabeth's chief minister. As a child Bacon was a favorite at court, and tradition represents him as something of a pet of the Queen, who called him «my young Lord Keeper.» His mother was among the most learned women of an age when, among women of rank, great learning was as common and as highly prized as great beauty; and her influence was a potent intellectual stimulus to the boy, although he revolted in early youth from the narrow creed which her fierce Puritan zeal strove to impose on her household. Outside of the nursery, the atmosphere of his world was that of craft, all directed to one end; for the Queen was the source of honor, power, and wealth, and advancement in life meant only a share in the grace distributed through her ministers and favorites. Apart from the harsh and forbidding religious teachings of his mother, young Francis had before him neither precept nor example of an ambition more worthy than that of courting the smiles of power.

At the age of twelve he entered Trinity College, Cambridge (April, 1573), and left it before he was fifteen (Christmas, 1575); the institution meanwhile having been broken up for more than half a year (August, 1574, to March, 1575) by the plague, so that his intermittent university career summed up less than fourteen months. There is no record of his studies, and the names of his teachers are unknown; for though Bacon in later years called himself a pupil of Whitgift, and his biographers assumed that the relation was direct and personal, yet that great master of Trinity had certainly ended his teaching days before Bacon went to Cambridge, and had entered as Dean of Lincoln on his splendid ecclesiastical career. University life was very different from that of our times. The statutes of Cambridge forbade a student, under penalties, to use in conversation with another any language but Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, unless in his private apartments and in hours of leisure. It was a regular custom at Trinity to bring before the assembled undergraduates every Thursday evening at seven o'clock such junior students as had been detected in breaches of the rules during the week, and to flog them. It would be interesting to know in what languages young Bacon conversed, and what experiences of discipline befell him; but his subsequent achievements at least suggest that Cambridge in the sixteenth century may have afforded more efficient educational influences than our knowledge of its resources and methods can explain. For it is certain that, at an age when our most promising youths are beginning serious study, Bacon's mind was already formed, his habits and modes of research were fixed, the universe of knowledge was an open field before him. Thenceforth he was no man's pupil, but in intellectual independence and solitude he rapidly matured into the supreme scholar of his age.

After registering as a student of law at Gray's Inn, apparently for the purpose of a nominal connection with a profession which might aid his patrons in promoting him at court, Bacon was sent in June, 1576, to France in the train of the British Ambassador, Sir Amyas Paulet; and for nearly three years followed the roving embassy around the great cities of that kingdom. The massacre of St. Bartholomew had taken place four years before, and the boy's recorded observations on the troubled society of France and of Europe show remarkable insight into the character of princes and the sources of political movements. Sir Nicholas had hitherto directed his son's education and associations with the purpose of making him an ornament of the court, and had set aside a fund to provide Francis at the proper time with a handsome estate. But he died suddenly, February 20th, 1579, without giving legal effect to this provision, and the sum designed for the young student was divided equally among the five children, while Francis was excluded from a share in the rest of the family fortune; and was thus called home to England to find himself a poor man.

He made himself a bachelor's home at Gray's Inn, and devoted his energies to the law, with such success that he was soon recognized as one of the most promising members of the profession. In 1584 he entered Parliament for Melcombe Regis in Somersetshire, and two years later sat for Liverpool. During these years the schism between his inner and his outer life continued to widen. Drawing his first breath in the atmosphere of the court, bred in the faith that honor and greatness come from princes' favor, with a native taste for luxury and magnificence which was fostered by delicate health, he steadily looked for advancement through the influence of Burghley and the smiles of the Queen. But Burghley had no sympathy with speculative thought, and distrusted him for his confidences concerning his higher studies, while he probably feared in Bacon a dangerous rival of his own son; so that with expressions of kind interest, he refrained from giving his nephew practical aid. Elizabeth, too, suspected that a young man who knew so many things could not be trusted to know his own business well, and preferred for important professional work others who were lawyers and nothing besides. Thus Bacon appeared to the world as a disappointed and uneasy courtier, struggling to keep up a certain splendor of appearance and associations under a growing load of debt, and servile to a Queen on whose caprice his prospects of a career must depend. His unquestioned power at the bar was exercised only in minor causes; his eloquence and political dexterity found slow recognition in Parliament, where they represented only themselves; and the question whether he would ever be a man of note in the kingdom seemed for twenty-five years to turn upon what the Crown might do for its humble suitor.

Meanwhile this laborious advocate and indefatigable courtier, whose labors at the bar and in attendance upon his great friends were enough to fill the days of two ordinary men, led his real life in secret, unknown to the world, and uncomprehended even by the few in whom he had divined a capacity for great thought, and whom he had selected for his confidants. From his childhood at the university, where he felt the emptiness of the Aristotelian logic, the instrument for attaining truth which traditional learning had consecrated, he had gradually formed the conception of a more fruitful process. He had become convinced that the learning of all past ages was but a poor result of the intellectual capacities and labors which had been employed upon it; that the human mind had never yet been properly used; that the methods hitherto adopted in research were but treadmill work, returning upon itself, or at best could produce but fragmentary and accidental additions to the sum of knowledge. All nature is crammed with truth, he believed, which it concerns man to discover; the intellect of man is constructed for its discovery, and needs but to be purged of errors of every kind, and directed in the most efficient employment of its faculties, to make sure that all the secrets of nature will be revealed, and its powers made tributary to the health, comfort, enjoyment, and progressive improvement of mankind.

This stupendous conception, of a revolution which should transform the world, seems to have taken definite form in Bacon's mind as early as his twenty-fifth year, when he embodied the outline of it in a Latin treatise; which he destroyed in later life, unpublished, as immature, and partly no doubt because he came to recognize in it an unbecoming arrogance of tone, for its title was ‘Temporis Partus Maximus’ (The Greatest Birth of Time.) But six years later he defines these «vast contemplative ends» in his famous letter to Burghley, asking for preferment which will enable him to prosecute his grand scheme and to employ other minds in aid of it. «For I have taken all knowledge to be my province,» he says, «and if I could purge it of two sorts of rovers, whereof the one with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities, the other with blind experiments and auricular traditions and impostures, hath committed so many spoils, I hope I should bring in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries: the best state of that province. This, whether it be curiosity or vain glory, or nature, or (if one take it favorably) *philanthropia*, is so fixed in my mind as it cannot be removed.»

This letter reveals the secret of Bacon's life, and all that we know of him, read in the light of it, forms a consistent and harmonious whole. He was possessed by his vast scheme, for a reformation of the intellectual world, and through it, of the world of human experience, as fully as was ever apostle by his faith. Implicitly believing in his own ability to accomplish it, at least in its grand outlines, and to leave at his death the community of mind at work, by the method and for the purposes which he had defined, with the perfection of all science in full view, he subordinated every other ambition to this; and in seeking and enjoying place, power, and wealth, still regarded them mainly as aids in prosecuting his master purpose, and in introducing it to the world. With this clearly in mind, it is easy to understand his subsequent career. Its external details may be read in any of the score of biographies which writers of all grades of merit and demerit have devoted to him, and there is no space for them here. For our purpose it is necessary to refer only to the principal crises in his public life.

Until the death of Elizabeth, Bacon had no place in the royal service worthy of his abilities as a lawyer. Many who, even in the narrowest professional sense, were far inferior to him, were preferred before him. Yet he obtained a position recognized by all, and second only in legal learning to his lifelong rival and constant adversary, Sir Edward Coke. To-day, it is probable that if the two greatest names in the history of the common law were to be selected by the suffrages of the profession, the great majority would be cast for Coke and Bacon. As a master of the intricacies of precedent and an authority upon the detailed formulas of «the perfection of reason,» the former is unrivaled still; but in the comprehensive grasp of the law as a system for the maintenance of social order and the protection of individual rights, Bacon rose far above him. The cherished aim of his professional career was to survey the whole body of the laws of England, to produce a digest of them which should result in a harmonious code, to do away with all that was found obsolete or inconsistent with the principles of the system, and thus to adapt the living, progressive body of the law to the wants of the growing nation. This magnificent plan was beyond the power of any one man, had his life no other task, but he suggested the method and the aim; and while for six generations after these legal giants passed away, the minute, accurate, and profound learning of Coke remained the acknowledged chief storehouse of British traditional jurisprudence, the seventh generation took up the work of revision and reform, and from the time of Bentham and Austin the progress of legal science has been toward codification. The contest between the aggregation of empirical rules and formulated customs which Coke taught as the common law, and the broad, harmonious application of scientific reason to the definition and enforcement of rights, still goes on; but with constant gains on the side of the reformers, all of whom with one consent confess that no general and complete reconstruction of legal doctrine as a science is possible, except upon the lines laid down by Bacon.

The most memorable case in which Bacon was employed to represent the Crown during Elizabeth's life was the prosecution of the Earl of Essex for treason. Essex had been Bacon's friend, patron, and benefactor; and as long as the earl remained faithful to the Queen and retained her favor, Bacon served him with ready zeal and splendid efficiency, and showed himself the wisest and most sincere of counselors. When Essex rejected his advice, forfeited the Queen's confidence by the follies from which Bacon had earnestly striven to deter him, and finally plunged into wanton and reckless rebellion, Bacon, with whom loyalty to his sovereign had always been the supreme duty, accepted a retainer from the Crown, and assisted Coke in the prosecution. The crime of Essex was the greatest of which a subject was capable; it lacked no circumstance of aggravation; if the most astounding instance of ingratitude and disloyalty to friendship ever known is to be sought in that age, it will be found in the conduct of Essex to Bacon's royal mistress. Yet writers of eloquence have exhausted their rhetorical powers in denouncing Bacon's faithlessness to his friend. But no impartial reader of the full story in the documents of the time can doubt that throughout these events Bacon did his duty and no more, and that in doing it he not merely made a voluntary sacrifice of his popularity, but a far more painful sacrifice of his personal feelings.

In 1603 James I. came to the throne, and in spite of the efforts of his most trusted ministers to keep Bacon in obscurity, soon discovered in him a man whom he needed. In 1607 he was made Solicitor-

General; in 1613 Attorney-General; in March 1617, on the death of Lord Ellesmere, he received the seals as Lord Keeper; and in January following was made Lord Chancellor of England. In July 1618 he was raised to the permanent peerage as Baron Verulam, and in January 1621 received the title of Viscount St. Albans. During these three years he was the first subject in the kingdom in dignity, and ought to have been the first in influence. His advice to the King, and to the Duke of Buckingham who was the King's king, was always judicious. In certain cardinal points of policy, it was of the highest statesmanship; and had it been followed, the history of the Stuart dynasty would have been different, and the Crown and the Parliament would have wrought together for the good and the honor of the nation, at least through a generation to come. But the upstart Buckingham was supreme. He had studied Bacon's strength and weakness, had laid him under great obligations, had at the same time attached him by the strongest tie of friendship to his person, and impressed upon his consciousness the fact that the fate of Bacon was at all times in his hands. The new Chancellor had entered on his great office with a fixed purpose to reform its abuses, to speed and cheapen justice, to free its administration from every influence of wealth and power. In the first three months of service he brought up the large arrears of business, tried every cause, heard every petition, and acquired a splendid reputation as an upright and diligent judge. But Buckingham was his evil angel. He was without sense of the sanctity of the judicial character; and regarded the bench, like every other public office, as an instrument of his own interests and will. On the other hand, to Bacon the voice of Buckingham was the voice of the King, and he had been taught from infancy as the beginning of his political creed that the king can do no wrong. Buckingham began at once to solicit from Bacon favors for his friends and dependants, and the Chancellor was weak enough to listen and to answer him. There is no evidence that in any one instance the favorite asked for the violation of law or the perversion of justice; much less that Bacon would or did accede to such a request. But the Duke demanded for one suitor a speedy hearing, for another a consideration of facts which might not be in evidence, for a third all the favor consistent with law; and Bacon reported to him the result, and how far he had been able to oblige him. This persistent tampering with the source of justice was a disturbing influence in the Chancellor's court, and unquestionably lowered the dignity of his attitude and weakened his judicial conscience.

Notwithstanding this, when the Lord Chancellor opened the Parliament in January, 1621, with a speech in praise of his King and in honor of the nation, he seemed to be at the summit of earthly prosperity. No voice had been lifted to question his purity and worth. He was the friend of the King, one of the chief supports of the throne, a champion indeed of high prerogative, but an orator of power, a writer of fame, whose advancement to the highest dignities had been welcomed by public opinion. Four months later he was a convicted criminal, sentenced for judicial corruption to imprisonment at the King's pleasure, to a fine of £40,000, and to perpetual incapacity for any public employment. Vicissitudes of fortune are commonplaces of history. Many a man once seemingly pinnacled on the top of greatness has «shot from the zenith like a falling star,» and become a proverb of the fickleness of fate. Some are torn down by the very traits of mind, passion, or temper, which have raised them: ambition which overleaps itself, rashness which hazards all on chances it cannot control, vast abilities not great enough to achieve the impossible. The plunge of Icarus into the sea, the murder of Cæsar, the imprisonment of Cœur de Lion, the abdication of Napoleon, the apprehension as a criminal of Jefferson Davis, each was a startling and impressive contrast to the glory which it followed, yet each was the natural result of causes which lay in the character and life of the sufferer, and made his story a consistent whole. But the pathos of Bacon's fall is the sudden moral ruin of a life which had been built up in honor for sixty years. An intellect of the first rank, which from boyhood to old age had been steadfast in the pursuit of truth and in the noblest services to mankind, which in a feeble body had been sustained in vigor by all the virtues of prudence and self-reverence; a genial nature, winning the affection and admiration of associates, hardly paralleled in the industry with which its energies were devoted to useful work, a soul exceptional among its contemporaries for piety and philanthropy — this man is represented to us by popular writers as having habitually sold justice for money, and as having become in office «the meanest of mankind.»

But this picture, as so often drawn, and as seemingly fixed in the popular mind, is not only impossible, but is demonstrably false. To review all the facts which correct it in detail would lead us far beyond our limits. It must suffice to refer to the great work of Spedding, in which the entire records of the case are found, and which would long ago have made the world just to Bacon's fame, but that the author's comment on his own complete and fair record is itself partial and extravagant. But the materials for a final judgment are accessible to all in Spedding's volumes, and a candid reading of them solves the enigma. Bacon was condemned without a trial, on his own confession, and this confession was consistent with the tenor of his life. Its substance was that he had failed to put a stop effectually to the immemorial custom in his court of receiving presents from suitors, but that he had never deviated from justice in his decrees. There was no instance in which he was accused of yielding to the influence of gifts, or passing judgment for a bribe. No act of his as Chancellor was impeached as illegal, or reversed as corrupt. Suitors complained that they had sent sums of money or valuable presents to his court, and had been disappointed in the result; but no one complained of injustice in a decision. Bacon was a conspicuous member of the royal party; and when the storm of popular fury broke in Parliament upon the court, the King and the ministry abandoned him. He had stood all his life upon the royal favor as the basis of his strength and hope; and when it was gone from under him, he sank helplessly, and refused to attempt a defense. But he still in his humiliation found comfort in the reflection that his ruin would put an end to «anything that is in the likeness of corruption» among the judges. And he wrote, in the hour of his deepest distress, that he had been «the justest Chancellor that hath been in the five changes that have been since Sir Nicholas Bacon's time.» Nor did any man of his time venture to contradict him, when in later years he summed up his case in the words, «I was the justest judge that was in England these fifty years. But it was the justest censure in Parliament that was these two hundred years.»

No revolution of modern times has been more complete than that which the last two centuries have silently wrought in the customary morality of British public life, and in the standards by which it is judged. Under James I. every office of state was held as the private property of its occupant. The highest places in the government were conferred only on condition of large payments to the King. He openly sold the honors and dignities of which he was the source. «The making of a baron,» that is, the right to sell to some rich plebeian a patent of nobility, was a common grant to favorites, and was actually bestowed on Bacon, to aid him in maintaining the state of his office. We have the testimony of James himself that all the lawyers, of whom the judges of the realm were made, were «so bred and nursed in corruption that they cannot leave it.» But the line between what the King called corruption and that which he and all his ministers practiced openly and habitually, as part of the regular work of government, is dim and hard to define. The mind of the community had not yet firmly grasped the conception of public office as a trust for the public good, and the general opinion which stimulates and sustains the official conscience in holding this trust sacred was still unformed. The courts of justice were the first branch of the government to feel the pressure of public opinion, and to respond to the demand for impersonal and impartial right. But this process had only begun when Bacon, who had never before served as judge, was called to preside in Chancery. The Chancellor's office was a gradual development: originally political and administrative rather than judicial, and with no salary or reward for hearing causes, save the voluntary presents of suitors who asked its interference with the ordinary courts, it step by step became the highest tribunal of the equity which limits and corrects the routine of law, and still the custom of gifts was unchecked. A careful study of Bacon's career shows that in this, as every other branch of thought, his theoretic convictions were in advance of his age; and in his advice to the King and in his inaugural promises as Chancellor, he foreshadows all the principles on which the wisest reformers of the public service now insist. But he failed to apply them with that heroic self-sacrifice which alone would have availed him, and the forces of custom and example continually encroached upon his views of duty. Having through a long life sought advancement and wealth for the purpose of using leisure and independence to carry out his beneficent plans on the largest scale, he eagerly accepted the traditional emoluments of his new position, in the conviction that they would become in his hands the means of vast good to mankind. It was only the public exposure which fully awakened him to a sense of the inconsistency and wrong of his conduct; and then he was himself his severest judge, and made every reparation in his power, by the most unreserved confession, by pointing out the danger to society of such weakness as his own in language to whose effectiveness nothing could be added, and by devoting the remainder of his life to the noblest work for humanity.

During the years of Bacon's splendor as a member of the government and as spokesman for the throne, his real life as a thinker, inspired by the loftiest ambition which ever entered the mind of man, that of creating a new and better civilization, was not interrupted. It was probably in 1603 that he wrote his fragmentary ‘Procœmium de Interpretatione Naturæ,’ or ‘Preface to a Treatise on Interpreting Nature,’ which is the only piece of autobiography he has left us. It was found among his papers after his death; and its candor, dignity, and enthusiasm of tone are in harmony with the imaginative grasp and magnificent suggestiveness of its thought. Commending the original Latin to all who can appreciate its eloquence, we cite the first sentences of it in English:—

«Believing that I was born for the service of mankind, and regarding the care of the Commonwealth as a kind of common property which, like the air and water, belongs to everybody, I set myself to consider in what way mankind might be best served, and what service I was myself best fitted by nature to perform.

«Now, among all the benefits that could be conferred upon mankind, I found none so great as the discovery of new arts for the bettering of human life. For I saw that among the rude people of early times, inventors and discoverers were reckoned as gods. It was seen that the works of founders of States, law-givers, tyrant-destroyers, and heroes cover but narrow spaces and endure but for a time; while the work of the inventor, though of less pomp, is felt everywhere and lasts forever. But above all, if a man could, I do not say devise some invention, however useful, but kindle a light in nature — a light which, even in rising, should touch and illuminate the borders of existing knowledge, and spreading further on should bring to light all that is most secret — that man, in my view, would be indeed the benefactor of mankind, the extender of man's empire over nature, the champion of freedom, the conqueror of fate.

«For myself, I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as for the study of Truth: as having a mind nimble and versatile enough to discern resemblances in things (the main point), and yet steady enough to distinguish the subtle differences in them; as being endowed with zeal to seek, patience to doubt, love of meditation, slowness of assertion, readiness to reconsider, carefulness to arrange and set in order; and as being a man that affects not the new nor admires the old, but hates all imposture. So I thought my nature had a certain familiarity and kindred with Truth.»

During the next two years he applied himself to the composition of the treatise on the 'Advancement of Learning,' the greatest of his English writings, and one which contains the seed-thoughts and outline principles of all his philosophy. From the time of its publication in 1605 to his fall in 1621, he continued to frame the plan of his 'Great Instauration' of human knowledge, and to write out chapters, books, passages, sketches, designed to take their places in it as essential parts. It was to include six great divisions: first, a general survey of existing knowledge; second, a guide to the use of the intellect in research, purging it of sources of error, and furnishing it with the new instrument of inductive logic by which all the laws of nature might be ascertained; third, a structure of the phenomena of nature, included in one hundred and thirty particular branches of natural history, as the materials for the new logic; fourth, a series of types and models of the entire mental process of discovering truth, «selecting various and remarkable instances»; fifth, specimens of the new philosophy, or anticipations of its results, in fragmentary contributions to the sixth and crowning division, which was to set forth the new philosophy in its completeness, comprehending the truths to be discovered by a perfected instrument of reasoning, in interpreting all the phenomena of the world. Well aware that the scheme, especially in its concluding part, was far beyond the power and time of any one man, he yet hoped to be the architect of the final edifice of science, by drawing its plans and making them intelligible, leaving their perfect execution to an intellectual world which could not fail to be moved to its supreme effort by a comprehension of the work before it. The 'Novum Organum,' itself but a fragment of the second division of the 'Instauration,' the key to the use of the intellect in the discovery of truth, was published in Latin at the height of his splendor as Lord Chancellor, in 1620, and is his most memorable achievement in philosophy. It contains a multitude of suggestive thoughts on the whole field of science, but is mainly the exposition of the fallacies by which the intellect is deceived and misled, and from which it must be purged in order to attain final truth, and of the new doctrine of «prerogative instances,» or crucial observations and experiments in the work of discovery.

In short, Bacon's entire achievement in science is a plan for an impossible universe of knowledge. As far as he attempted to advance particular sciences by applying his method to their detailed phenomena, he wrought with imperfect knowledge of what had been done, and with cumbrous and usually misdirected efforts to fill the gaps he recognized. In a few instances, by what seems an almost superhuman instinct for truth, rather than the laborious process of investigation which he taught, he anticipated brilliant discoveries of later centuries. For example, he clearly pointed out the necessity of regarding heat as a form of motion in the molecules of matter, and thus foreshadowed, without any conception of the means of proving it, that which, for investigators of the nineteenth century, has proved the most direct way to the secrets of nature. But the testimony of the great teachers of science is unanimous, that Bacon was not a skilled observer of phenomena, nor a discoverer of scientific inductions; that he contributed no important new truth, in the sense of an established law, to any department of knowledge; and that his method of research and reasoning is not, in its essential features, that which is fruitfully pursued by them in extending the boundaries of science, nor was his mind wholly purged of those «idols of the cave,» or forms of personal bias, whose varying forms as hindrances to the «dry light» of sound reason he was the first to expose. He never appreciated the mathematics as the basis of physics, but valued their elements mainly as a mental discipline. Astronomy meant little to him, since he failed to connect it directly with human well-being and improvement; to the system of Copernicus, the beginning of our insight into the heavens, he was hostile, or at least indifferent; and the splendid discoveries successively made by Tycho Brahe, Galileo, and Kepler, and brought to his ears while the 'Great

Instauration' filled his mind and heart, met with but a feeble welcome with him, or none. Why is it, then, that Bacon's is the foremost name in the history of English, and perhaps, as many insist, of all modern thought? Why is it that «the Baconian philosophy» is another phrase, in all the languages of Europe, for that splendid development of the study and knowledge of the visible universe which since his time has changed the life of mankind?

A candid answer to these questions will expose an error as wide in the popular estimate of Bacon's intellectual greatness as that which has prevailed so generally regarding his character. He is called the inventor of inductive reasoning, the reformer of logic, the lawgiver of the world of thought; but he was no one of these. His grasp of the inductive method was defective; his logic was clumsy and impractical; his plan for registering all phenomena and selecting and generalizing from them, making the discovery of truth almost a mechanical process, was worthless. In short, it is not as a philosopher nor as a man of science that Bacon has carved his name in the high places of enduring fame, but rather as a man of letters; as on the whole the greatest writer of the modern world, outside of the province of imaginative art; as the Shakespeare of English prose. Does this seem a paradox to the reader who remembers that Bacon distrusted all modern languages, and thought to make his 'Advancement of Learning' «live, and be a citizen of the world,» by giving it a Latin form? That his lifelong ambition was to reconstruct methods of thought, and guide intellect in the way of work serviceable to comfort and happiness? That the books in which his English style appears in its perfection, the 'History of Henry VII.,' the 'Essays,' and the papers on public affairs, were but incidents and avocations of a life absorbed by a master purpose?

But what is literature? It is creative mind, addressing itself in worthy expression to the common receptive mind of mankind. Its note is universality, as distinguished from all that is technical, limited, and narrow. Thought whose interest is as broad as humanity, suitably clothed in the language of real life, and thus fitted for access to the general intelligence, constitutes true literature, to the exclusion of that which, by its nature or by its expression, appeals only to a special class or school. The 'Opus Anglicanum' of Duns Scotus, Newton's 'Principia,' Lavoisier's treatise 'Sur la Combustion,' Kant's 'Kritik der Reinen Vernunft' (Critique of Pure Reason), each made an epoch in some vast domain of knowledge or belief; but none of them is literature. Yet the thoughts they, through a limited and specially trained class of students, introduced to the world, were gradually taken up into the common stock of mankind, and found their broad, effective, complete expression in the literature of after generations. If we apply this test to Bacon's life work, we shall find sufficient justification for honoring him above all special workers in narrower fields, as next to Shakespeare the greatest name in the greatest period of English literature.

It was not as an experimenter, investigator, or technical teacher, but as a thinker and a writer, that he rendered his great service to the world. This consisted essentially in the contribution of two magnificent ideas to the common stock of thought: the idea of the utility of science, as able to subjugate the forces of nature to the use of man; and the idea of continued and boundless progress in the comfort and happiness of the individual life, and in the order and dignity of human society. It has been shown how, from early manhood, he was inspired by the conception of infinite resources in the material world, for the discovery and employment of which the human mind is adapted. He never wearied of pointing out the imperfection and fruitlessness of the methods of inquiry and of invention hitherto in use, and the splendid results which could be rapidly attained if a combined and systematic effort were made to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge. This led him directly to the conception of an improved and advancing civilization; to the utterance, in a thousand varied, impressive, and fascinating forms, of that idea of human progress which is the inspiration, the characteristic, and the hope of the modern world. Bacon was the first of men to grasp these ideas in all their comprehensiveness as feasible purposes, as practical aims; to teach the development of them as the supreme duty and ambition of his contemporaries, and to look forward instead of behind him for the Golden Age. Enforcing and applying these thoughts with a wealth of learning, a keenness of wit, a soundness of judgment, and a suggestiveness of illustration unequaled by any writer before him, he became the greatest literary power of modern times to stimulate minds in every department of life to their noblest efforts and their worthiest achievements.

Literature has a twofold aspect: its ideal is pure truth, which is the noblest thought embodied in perfect beauty of form. It is the union of science and art, the final wedding in which are merged the knowledge worthy to be known and the highest imagination presenting it. There is a school calling itself that of pure art, to which substance is nothing and form is everything. Its measure of merit is applied to the manner only; and the meanest of subjects, the most trivial and even the most degraded of ideas or facts, is welcomed to its high places if clothed in a satisfying garb. But this school, though arrogant in the other arts of expression, has not yet been welcomed to the judgment-seat in literature, where indeed it is passing even now to contempt and oblivion. Bacon's instinct was for substance. His strongest passion was for utility. The artistic side of his nature was receptive rather than creative. Splendid passages in the 'Advancement' and 'De Augmentis' show his profound appreciation of all the arts of expression, but show likewise his inability to glorify them above that which they express. In his mind, language is subordinate to thought, and the painting to the picture, just as the frame is to the painting or the binding to the book. He writes always in the grand style. He reminds us of «the large utterance of the early gods.» His sentences are weighted with thought, as suggestive as Plato, as condensed as Thucydides. Full of wit, keen in discerning analogies, rich in intellectual ornament, he is yet too concentrated in his attention to the idea to care for the melody of language. He decorates with fruits, not with flowers. For metrical movement, for rhythmic harmony, he has no ear nor sense. Inconceivable as it is that Shakespeare could have written one aphorism of the 'Novum Organum,' it would be far more absurd to imagine Bacon writing a line of the Sonnets. With the loftiest imagination, the liveliest fancy, the keenest sense of precision and appropriateness in words, he lacks the special gift of poetic form, the faculty divine which finds new inspiration in the very limitations of measured language, and whose natural expression is music alike to the ear and to the mind. His powers were cramped by the fetters of metre, and his attempts to versify even rich thought and deep feeling were puerile. But his prose is by far the weightiest, the most lucid, effective, and pleasing of his day. The poet Sprat justly says:—

> «He was a man of strong, clear, and powerful imaginations; his genius was searching and inimitable; and of this I need give no other proof than his style itself, which as for the most part it describes men's minds as well as pictures do their bodies, so it did his above all men living.»

And Ben Jonson, who knew him well, describes his eloquence in terms which are confirmed by all we know of his Parliamentary career:—

> «One, though he be excellent and the chief, is not to be imitated alone; for no imitator ever grew up to his author: likeness is always on this side truth. Yet there happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language (when he could spare or pass by a iest) was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more rightly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded when he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end.»

The speeches of Bacon are almost wholly lost, his philosophy is an undeciphered heap of fragments, the ambitions of his life lay in ruins about his dishonored old age; yet his intellect is one of the great moving and still vital forces of the modern world, and he remains, for all ages to come, in the literature which is the final storehouse of the chief treasures of mankind, one of

> «The dead yet sceptered sovereigns who still rule
> Our spirits from their urns.»

Charlton T. Lewis

OF TRUTH

From the ‹Essays›

What is Truth? said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness; and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits, which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth, nor again, that when it is found it imposeth upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor: but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later school of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure as with poets, nor for advantage as with the merchant; but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks and mummeries and triumphs of the world half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy *vinum dæmonum*, because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in and settleth in it, that doth the hurt; such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his Spirit. . . . The poet that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well:—"It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle and the adventures thereof below; but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth" (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), "and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below:" so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business: it will be acknowledged even by those that practice it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious; and therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace and such an odious charge. Saith he, "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much as to say that he is brave toward God and a coward toward men." For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold, that when Christ cometh, "he shall not find faith upon the earth."

OF REVENGE

From the 'Essays'

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior: for it is a prince's part to pardon. and Solomon, I am sure, saith, "It is the glory of a man to pass by an offense." That which is past is gone and irrevocable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come; therefore, they do but trifle with themselves that labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like. Therefore, why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong merely out of ill-nature, why yet it is but like the thorn or brier, which prick and scratch because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy; but then, let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish, else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh. This is the more generous; for the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt as in making the party repent. But base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark. Cosmus, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable. "You shall read," saith he, "that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends." But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune: "Shall we," saith he, "take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also?" And so of friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate: as that for the death of Cæsar; for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry the Third of France; and many more. But in private revenges it is not so. Nay, rather vindictive persons live the life of witches; who, as they are mischievous, so end they infortunate.

OF SIMULATION AND DISSIMULATION

From the ‹Essays›

DISSIMULATION is but a faint kind of policy or wisdom; for it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth, and to do it. Therefore it is the weaker sort of politicians that are the great dissemblers.

Tacitus saith, «Livia sorted well with the arts of her husband and dissimulation of her son;» attributing arts of policy to Augustus, and dissimulation to Tiberius. And again, when Mucianus encourageth Vespasian to take arms against Vitellius, he saith, «We rise not against the piercing judgment of Augustus, nor the extreme caution or closeness of Tiberius.» These properties of arts or policy, and dissimulation or closeness, are indeed habits and faculties several, and to be distinguished. For if a man have that penetration of judgment as he can discern what things are to be laid open, and what to be secreted, and what to be showed at half-lights, and to whom and when, (which indeed are arts of state and arts of life, as Tacitus well calleth them,) to him a habit of dissimulation is a hindrance and a poorness. But if a man cannot obtain to that judgment, then it is left to him generally to be close, and a dissembler. For where a man cannot choose or vary in particulars, there it is good to take the safest and wariest way in general; like the going softly, by one that cannot well see. Certainly the ablest men that ever were, have had all an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of certainty and veracity: but then they were like horses well managed, for they could tell passing well when to stop or turn; and at such times when they thought the case indeed required dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion spread abroad of their good faith and clearness of dealing made them almost invisible.

There be three degrees of this hiding and veiling of a man's self. The first, Closeness, Reservation, and Secrecy; when a man leaveth himself without observation, or without hold to be taken, what he is. The second, Dissimulation, in the negative; when a man lets fall signs and arguments, that he is not that he is. And the third, Simulation, in the affirmative; when a man industriously and expressly feigns and pretends to be that he is not.

For the first of these, Secrecy: it is indeed the virtue of a confessor. And assuredly the secret man heareth many confessions; for who will open himself to a blab or a babbler? But if a man be thought secret, it inviteth discovery, as the more close air sucketh in the more open; and as in confession the revealing is not for worldly use, but for the ease of a man's heart, so secret men come to the knowledge of many things in that kind: while men rather discharge their minds than impart their minds. In few words, mysteries are due to secrecy. Besides (to say truth), nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as body; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers and futile persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal; for he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not. Therefore set it down, that a habit of secrecy is both politic and moral. And in this part it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak; for the discovery of a man's self by the tracts of his countenance is a great weakness and betraying, by how much it is many times more marked and believed than a man's words.

For the second, which is Dissimulation: it followeth many times upon secrecy by a necessity; so that he that will be secret must be a dissembler in some degree. For men are too cunning to suffer a man to keep an indifferent carriage between both, and to be secret, without swaying the balance on either side. They will so beset a man with questions, and draw him on, and pick it out of him, that without an absurd silence, he must show an inclination one way; or if he do not, they will gather as much by his silence as by his speech. As for equivocations, or oraculous speeches, they cannot hold out long. So that no man can be secret, except he give himself a little scope of dissimulation; which is, as it were, but the skirts or train of secrecy.

But for the third degree, which is Simulation and false profession: that I hold more culpable and less politic, except it be in great and rare matters. And therefore a general custom of simulation (which is this last degree) is a vice rising either of a natural falseness or fearfulness, or of a mind that hath some main faults; which because a man must needs disguise, it maketh him practice simulation in other things, lest his hand should be out of use.

The great advantages of simulation and dissimulation are three. First, to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise; for where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarum to call up all that are against them. The second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat; for if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through or take a fall. The third is, the better to discover the mind of another; for to him that opens himself men will hardly show themselves adverse, but will fair let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought. And therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, "Tell a lie and find a troth;" as if there were no way of discovery but by simulation. There be also three disadvantages to set it even. The first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a show of fearfulness; which in any business doth spoil the feathers of round flying up to the mark. The second, that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits of many that perhaps would otherwise co-operate with him, and makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends. The third and greatest is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action; which is trust and belief. The best composition and temperature is, to have openness in fame and opinion; secrecy in habit; dissimulation in seasonable use; and a power to feign if there be no remedy.

OF TRAVEL

From the 'Essays'

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. He that traveleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor or grave servant, I allow well: so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yielded. For else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing, that in sea voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Let diaries therefore be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are, the courts of princes, specially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbors; antiquities and ruins; libraries; colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories; arsenals; magazines; exchanges; burses; warehouses; exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasuries of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities: and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go. After all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not to be put in mind of them: yet are they not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do. First, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth. Then he must have such a servant or tutor as knoweth the country, as was likewise said. Let him carry with him also some card or book, describing the country where he traveleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry. Let him keep also a diary. Let him not stay long in one city or town; more or less as the place deserveth, but not long: nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another; which is a great adamant of acquaintance. Let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he traveleth. Let him upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth; that he may use his favor in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel: that which is most of all profitable, is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors; for so in traveling in one country he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad; that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame. For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided. They are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words. And let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveler returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath traveled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth. And let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.

OF FRIENDSHIP

From the ‹Essays›

IT HAD been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words than in that speech, «Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god.» For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversion toward society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation: such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen, as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company; and faces are but a gallery of pictures; and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little: «Magna civitas, magna solitudo;» because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods. But we may go further, and affirm most truly that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind. You may take sarza to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain: but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend; to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak; so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves; which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites, or privadoes; as if it were matter of grace or conversation. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them «participes curarum»; for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after surnamed the Great) to that height that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; «for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting.» With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew; and this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Cæsar would have discharged the Senate in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the Senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favor was so great as Antonius, in a letter which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero's Philippics, calleth him «venefica»—«witch»; as if he had enchanted Cæsar. Augustus raised Agrippa (though of mean birth) to that height as, when he consulted with Mæcenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took the liberty to tell him, «that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa or take away his life: there was no third way, he had made him so great.» With Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus had ascended to that height as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, «Hæc pro amicitia nostra non occultavi» [these things, from our friendship, I have not concealed from you]; and the whole Senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like, or more, was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also, in a letter to the Senate, by these words: «I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live me.» Now, if these princes had been as a Trajan or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half-piece, except they might have a friend to make it entire: and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none, and least of all those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith, that toward his latter time «that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding.» Surely Comineus mought have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master Louis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true: «Cor ne edito,»—«Eat not the heart.» Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth, of operation upon a man's mind of like virtue as the alchymists use to attribute to their stone for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature: for in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action, and on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so it is of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests, but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshaleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the King of Persia, «That speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad; whereby the imagery doth appear in figure: whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs.» Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel (they indeed are best); but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, «Dry light is ever the best;» and certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another, is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as is a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts: the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine sometimes too piercing and corrosive; reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead; observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case: but the best receipt (best I say to work and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune: for, as St. James saith, they are as men «that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favor.» As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or, that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or, that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters; or, that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all: but when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight: and if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man, it is well (that is to say, better, perhaps, than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers: one, that he shall not be faithfully counseled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it: the other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief, and partly of remedy; even as if you would call a physician, that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in a way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind, and so cure the disease and kill the patient: but a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon the other inconvenience. And therefore, rest not upon scattered counsels: they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment), followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid, and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself: and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients to say, "that a friend is another himself;" for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him; so that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are, as it were, granted to him and his deputy; for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there, which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself; A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate, or beg, and a number of the like: but all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms: whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person: but to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part, if he have not a friend he may quit the stage.

DEFECTS OF THE UNIVERSITIES

From ‹The Advancement of Learning› (Book ii.)

AMONGST so many great foundations of colleges in Europe, I find it strange that they are all dedicated to professions, and none left free to arts and sciences at large. For if men judge that learning should be referred to action, they judge well: but in this they fall into the error described in the ancient fable, in which the other parts of the body did suppose the stomach had been idle, because it neither performed the office of motion, as the limbs do, nor of sense, as the head doth; but yet notwithstanding it is the stomach that digesteth and distributeth to all the rest. So if any man think philosophy and universality to be idle studies, he doth not consider that all professions are from thence served and supplied. And this I take to be a great cause that hath hindered the progression of learning, because these fundamental knowledges have been studied but in passage. For if you will have a tree bear more fruit than it hath used to do, it is not anything you can do to the boughs, but it is the stirring of the earth and putting new mold about the roots that must work it. Neither is it to be forgotten, that this dedicating of foundations and dotations to professory learning hath not only had a malign aspect and influence upon the growth of sciences, but hath also been prejudicial to States and governments. For hence it proceedeth that princes find a solitude in regard of able men to serve them in causes of estate, because there is no education collegiate which is free; where such as were so disposed mought give themselves to histories, modern languages, books of policy and civil discourse, and other the like enablements unto service of estate.

And because founders of colleges do plant, and founders of lectures do water, it followeth well in order to speak of the defect which is in public lectures; namely, in the smallness and meanness of the salary or reward which in most places is assigned unto them; whether they be lectures of arts, or of professions For it is necessary to the progression of sciences that readers be of the most able and sufficient men; as those which are ordained for generating and propagating of sciences, and not for transitory use. This cannot be, except their condition and endowment be such as may content the ablest man to appropriate his whole labor and continue his whole age in that function and attendance; and therefore must have a proportion answerable to that mediocrity or competency of advancement, which may be expected from a profession or the practice of a profession. So as, if you will have sciences flourish, you must observe David's military law, which was, «That those which staid with the carriage should have equal part with those which were in the action»; else will the carriages be ill attended. So readers in sciences are indeed the guardians of the stores and provisions of sciences whence men in active courses are furnished, and therefore ought to have equal entertainment with them; otherwise if the fathers in sciences be of the weakest sort or be ill maintained,

«Et patrum invalidi referent jejunia nati:»

[Weakness of parents will show in feebleness of offspring.]

Another defect I note, wherein I shall need some alchemist to help me, who call upon men to sell their books and to build furnaces; quitting and forsaking Minerva and the Muses as barren virgins, and relying upon Vulcan. But certain it is, that unto the deep, fruitful, and operative study of many sciences, specially natural philosophy and physic, books be not only the instrumentals; wherein also the beneficence of men hath not been altogether wanting. For we see spheres, globes, astrolabes, maps, and the like, have been provided as appurtenances to astronomy and cosmography, as well as books. We see likewise that some places instituted for physic have annexed the commodity of gardens for simples of all sorts, and do likewise command the use of dead bodies for anatomies. But these do respect but a few things. In general, there will hardly be any main proficience in the disclosing of nature, except there be some allowance for expenses about experiments; whether they be experiments appertaining to Vulcanus or Dædalus, furnace or engine, or any other kind. And therefore, as secretaries and spials of princes and states bring in bills for intelligence, so you must allow the spials and intelligencers of nature to bring in their bills; or else you shall be ill advertised.

And if Alexander made such a liberal assignation to Aristotle of treasure for the allowance of hunters, fowlers, fishers, and the like, that he mought compile an history of nature, much better do they deserve it that travail in arts of nature.

Another defect which I note, is an intermission or neglect in those which are governors in universities of consultation, and in princes or superior persons of visitation; to enter into account and consideration, whether the readings, exercises, and other customs appertaining unto learning, anciently begun and since continued, be well instituted or no; and thereupon to ground an amendment or reformation in that which shall be found inconvenient. For it is one of your Majesty's own most wise and princely maxims, "that in all usages and precedents, the times be considered wherein they first began; which if they were weak or ignorant, it derogateth from the authority of the usage, and leaveth it for suspect." And therefore inasmuch as most of the usages and orders of the universities were derived from more obscure times, it is the more requisite they be re-examined. In this kind I will give an instance or two, for example's sake, of things that are the most obvious and familiar. The one is a matter, which, though it be ancient and general, yet I hold to be an error; which is, that scholars in universities come too soon and too unripe to logic and rhetoric, arts fitter for graduates than children and novices. For these two, rightly taken, are the gravest of sciences, being the arts of arts; the one for judgment, the other for ornament. And they be the rules and directions how to set forth and dispose matter: and therefore for minds empty and unfraught with matter, and which have not gathered that which Cicero calleth *sylva* and *supellex*, stuff and variety, to begin with those arts (as if one should learn to weigh or to measure or to paint the wind) doth work but this effect, that the wisdom of those arts, which is great and universal, is almost made contemptible, and is degenerate into childish sophistry and ridiculous affectation. And further, the untimely learning of them hath drawn on by consequence the superficial and unprofitable teaching and writing of them, as fitteth indeed to the capacity of children. Another is a lack I find in the exercises used in the universities, which do make too great a divorce between invention and memory. For their speeches are either premeditate, in *verbis conceptis*, where nothing is left to invention, or merely extemporal, where little is left to memory; whereas in life and action there is least use of either of these, but rather of intermixtures of premeditation and invention, notes and memory. So as the exercise fitteth not the practice, nor the image the life; and it is ever a true rule in exercises, that they be framed as near as may be to the life of practice; for otherwise they do pervert the motions and faculties of the mind, and not prepare them. The truth whereof is not obscure, when scholars come to the practices of professions, or other actions of civil life; which when they set into, this want is soon found by themselves, and sooner by others. But this part, touching the amendment of the institutions and orders of universities, I will conclude with the clause of Cæsar's letter to Oppius and Balbus, « Hoc quem admodum fieri possit, nonnulla mihi in mentem veniunt, et multa reperiri possunt: de iis rebus rogo vos ut cogitationem suscipiatis.» [How this may be done, some ways come to my mind and many may be devised; I ask you to take these things into consideration.]

Another defect which I note ascendeth a little higher than the precedent. For as the proficience of learning consisteth much in the orders and institutions of universities in the same States and kingdoms, so it would be yet more advanced, if there were more intelligence mutual between the universities of Europe than now there is. We see there be many orders and foundations, which though they be divided under several sovereignties and territories, yet they take themselves to have a kind of contract, fraternity, and correspondence one with the other, insomuch as they have Provincials and Generals. And surely as nature createth brotherhood in families, and arts mechanical contract brotherhoods in communalties, and the anointment of God superinduceth a brotherhood in kings and bishops; so in like manner there cannot but be a fraternity in learning and illumination, relating to that paternity which is attributed to God, who is called the Father of illuminations or lights.

The last defect which I will note is, that there hath not been, or very rarely been, any public designation of writers or inquirers concerning such parts of knowledge as may appear not to have been already sufficiently labored or undertaken; unto which point it is an inducement to enter into a view and examination what parts of learning have been prosecuted, and what omitted. For the opinion of plenty is amongst the causes of want, and the great quantity of books maketh a show rather of superfluity than lack; which surcharge nevertheless is not to be remedied by making no more books, but by making more good books, which, as the serpent of Moses, mought devour the serpents of the enchanters.

The removing of all the defects formerly enumerated, except the last, and of the active part also of the last (which is the designation of writers), are *opera basilica* [kings' works]; towards which the endeavors of a private man may be but as an image in a cross-way, that may point at the way, but cannot go it. But the inducing part of the latter (which is the survey of learning) may be set forward by private travail. Wherefore I will now attempt to make a general and faithful perambulation of learning, with an inquiry what parts thereof lie fresh and waste, and not improved and converted by the industry of man; to the end that such a plot made and recorded to memory, may both minister light to any public designation, and also serve to excite voluntary endeavors. Wherein nevertheless my purpose is at this time to note only omissions and deficiencies, and not to make any redargution of errors or incomplete prosecutions. For it is one thing to set forth what ground lieth unmanured, and another thing to correct ill husbandry in that which is manured.

In the handling and undertaking of which work I am not ignorant what it is that I do now move and attempt, nor insensible of mine own weakness to sustain my purpose. But my hope is, that if my extreme love to learning carry me too far, I may obtain the excuse of affection; for that "it is not granted to man to love and to be wise." But I know well I can use no other liberty of judgment than I must leave to others; and I, for my part, shall be indifferently glad either to perform myself, or accept from another, that duty of humanity, "Nam qui erranti comiter monstrat viam," etc. [To kindly show the wanderer the path.] I do foresee likewise that of those things which I shall enter and register as deficiencies and omissions, many will conceive and censure that some of them are already done and extant; others to be but curiosities, and things of no great use; and others to be of too great difficulty and almost impossibility to be compassed and effected. But for the two first, I refer myself to the particulars For the last, touching impossibility, I take it those things are to be held possible which may be done by some person, though not by every one; and which may be done by many, though not by any one; and which may be done in the succession of ages, though not within the hour-glass of one man's life; and which may be done by public designation, though not by private endeavor. But notwithstanding, if any man will take to himself rather that of Solomon, «Dicit piger, Leo est in via» [the sluggard says there is a lion in the path], than that of Virgil, «Possunt quia posse videntur» [they can, because they think they can], I shall be content that my labors be esteemed but as the better sort of wishes. for as it asketh some knowledge to demand a question not impertinent, so it requireth some sense to make a wish not absurd.

TO MY LORD TREASURER BURGHLEY

From ‹Letters and Life,› by James Spedding

My Lord:

With as much confidence as mine own honest and faithful devotion unto your service and your honorable correspondence unto me and my poor estate can breed in a man, do I commend myself unto your Lordship. I wax now somewhat ancient; one and thirty years is a great deal of sand in the hour-glass. My health, I thank God, I find confirmed; and I do not fear that action shall impair it, because I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful than most parts of action are. I ever bare a mind (in some middle place that I could discharge) to serve her Majesty; not as a man born under Sol, that loveth honor; nor under Jupiter, that loveth business (for the contemplative planet carrieth me away wholly); but as a man born under an excellent Sovereign, that deserveth the dedication of all men's abilities. Besides, I do not find in myself so much self-love, but that the greater parts of my thoughts are to deserve well (if I were able) of my friends, and namely of your Lordship; who being the Atlas of this commonwealth, the honor of my house, and the second founder of my poor estate, I am tied by all duties, both of a good patriot and of an unworthy kinsman, and of an obliged servant, to employ whatsoever I am to do you service. Again, the meanness of my estate does somewhat move me; for though I cannot excuse myself that I am either prodigal or slothful, yet my health is not to spend, nor my course to get. Lastly, I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends: for I have taken all knowledge to be my province; and if I could purge it of two sorts of rovers, whereof the one with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities, the other with blind experiments and auricular traditions and impostures, hath committed so many spoils, I hope I should bring in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries; the best state of that province. This, whether it be curiosity, or vain glory, or nature, or (if one take it favorably) *philanthropia*, is so fixed in my mind as it cannot be removed. And I do easily see, that place of any reasonable countenance doth bring commandment of more wits than of a man's own; which is the thing I greatly affect. And for your Lordship, perhaps you shall not find more strength and less encounter in any other. And if your Lordship shall find now, or at any time, that I do seek or affect any place whereunto any that is nearer unto your Lordship shall be concurrent, say then that I am a most dishonest man. And if your Lordship will not carry me on, I will not do as Anaxagoras did, who reduced himself with contemplation unto voluntary poverty: but this I will do; I will sell the inheritance that I have, and purchase some lease of quick revenue, or some office of gain that shall be executed by deputy, and so give over all care of service, and become some sorry book-maker, or a true pioneer in that mine of truth, which (he said) lay so deep. This which I have writ unto your Lordship is rather thoughts than words, being set down without all art, disguising, or reservation. Wherein I have done honor both to your Lordship's wisdom, in judging that that will be best believed of your Lordship which is truest, and to your Lordship's good nature, in retaining nothing from you. And even so I wish your Lordship all happiness, and to myself means and occasion to be added to my faithful desire to do you service. From my lodging at Gray's Inn.

IN PRAISE OF KNOWLEDGE

From ‹Letters and Life,› by James Spedding

Silence were the best celebration of that which I mean to commend; for who would not use silence, where silence is not made, and what crier can make silence in such a noise and tumult of vain and popular opinions?

My praise shall be dedicated to the mind itself. The mind is the man and the knowledge of the mind. A man is but what he knoweth. The mind itself is but an accident to knowledge; for knowledge is a double of that which is; the truth of being and the truth of knowing is all one.

Are not the pleasures of the affections greater than the pleasures of the senses? And are not the pleasures of the intellect greater than the pleasures of the affections? Is not knowledge a true and only natural pleasure, whereof there is no satiety? Is it not knowledge that doth alone clear the mind of all perturbation? How many things are there which we imagine not? How many things do we esteem and value otherwise than they are! This ill-proportioned estimation, these vain imaginations, these be the clouds of error that turn into the storms of perturbation. Is there any such happiness as for a man's mind to be raised above the confusion of things, where he may have the prospect of the order of nature and the error of men?

But is this a vein only of delight, and not of discovery? of contentment, and not of benefit? Shall he not as well discern the riches of nature's warehouse, as the benefit of her shop? Is truth ever barren? Shall he not be able thereby to produce worthy effects, and to endow the life of man with infinite commodities?

But shall I make this garland to be put upon a wrong head? Would anybody believe me, if I should verify this upon the knowledge that is now in use? Are we the richer by one poor invention, by reason of all the learning that hath been these many hundred years? The industry of artificers maketh some small improvement of things invented; and chance sometimes in experimenting maketh us to stumble upon somewhat which is new; but all the disputation of the learned never brought to light one effect of nature before unknown. When things are known and found out, then they can descant upon them, they can knit them into certain causes, they can reduce them to their principles. If any instance of experience stand against them, they can range it in order by some distinctions. But all this is but a web of the wit, it can work nothing. I do not doubt but that common notions, which we call reason, and the knitting of them together, which we call logic, are the art of reason and studies. But they rather cast obscurity than gain light to the contemplation of nature. All the philosophy of nature which is now received, is either the philosophy of the Grecians, or that other of the Alchemists. That of the Grecians hath the foundations in words, in ostentation, in confutation, in sects, in schools, in disputations. The Grecians were (as one of themselves saith), "you Grecians, ever children." They knew little antiquity; they knew (except fables) not much above five hundred years before themselves; they knew but a small portion of the world. That of the Alchemists hath the foundation in imposture, in auricular traditions and obscurity; it was catching hold of religion, but the principle of it is, "Populus vult decipi." So that I know no great difference between these great philosophies, but that the one is a loud-crying folly, and the other is a whispering folly. The one is gathered out of a few vulgar observations, and the other out of a few experiments of a furnace. The one never faileth to multiply words, and the other ever faileth to multiply gold. Who would not smile at Aristotle, when he admireth the eternity and invariableness of the heavens, as there were not the like in the bowels of the earth? Those be the confines and borders of these two kingdoms, where the continual alteration and incursion are. The superficies and upper parts of the earth are full of varieties. The superficies and lower part of the heavens (which we call the middle region of the air) is full of variety. There is much spirit in the one part that cannot be brought into mass. There is much massy body in the other place that cannot be refined to spirit. The common air is as the waste ground between the borders. Who would not smile at the astronomers? I mean not these new carmen which drive the earth about, but the ancient astronomers, which feign the moon to be the swiftest of all planets in motion, and the rest in order, the higher the slower; and so are compelled to imagine a double motion; whereas how evident is it, that that which they call a contrary motion is but an abatement of motion. The fixed stars overgo Saturn, and so in them and the rest all is but one motion, and the nearer the earth the slower; a motion also whereof air and water do participate, though much interrupted.

But why do I in a conference of pleasure enter into these great matters, in sort that pretending to know much, I should forget what is seasonable? Pardon me, it was because all [other] things may be endowed and adorned with speeches, but knowledge itself is more beautiful than any apparel of words that can be put upon it.

And let not me seem arrogant, without respect to these great reputed authors. Let me so give every man his due, as I give Time his due, which is to discover truth. Many of these men had greater wits, far above mine own, and so are many in the universities of Europe at this day. But alas, they learn nothing there but to believe: first to believe that others know that which they know not; and after [that] themselves know that which they know not. But indeed facility to believe, impatience to doubt, temerity to answer, glory to know, doubt to contradict, end to gain, sloth to search, seeking things in words, resting in part of nature; these, and the like, have been the things which have forbidden the happy match between the mind of man and the nature of things, and in place thereof have married it to vain notions and blind experiments. And what the posterity and issue of so honorable a match may be, it is not hard to consider. Printing, a gross invention; artillery, a thing that lay not far out of the way; the needle, a thing partly known before; what a change have these three made in the world in these times; the one in state of learning, the other in state of the war, the third in the state of treasure, commodities, and navigation. And those, I say, were but stumbled upon and lighted upon by chance. Therefore, no doubt the sovereignty of man lieth hid in knowledge; wherein many things are reserved, which kings with their treasure cannot buy, nor with their force command; their spials and intelligencers can give no news of them, their seamen and discoverers cannot sail where they grow. Now we govern nature in opinions, but we are thrall unto her in necessity; but if we would be led by her in invention, we should command her in action.

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR, TOUCHING THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN

From ‹Letters and Life,› by James Spedding

It may please your good Lordship:

SOME late act of his Majesty, referred to some former speech which I have heard from your Lordship, bred in me a great desire, and by strength of desire a boldness to make an humble proposition to your Lordship, such as in me can be no better than a wish: but if your Lordship should apprehend it, may take some good and worthy effect. The act I speak of, is the order given by his Majesty, as I understand, for the erection of a tomb or monument for our late sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth: wherein I may note much, but this at this time; that as her Majesty did always right to his Highness's hopes, so his Majesty doth in all things right to her memory; a very just and princely retribution. But from this occasion, by a very easy ascent, I passed furder, being put in mind, by this Representative of her person, of the more true and more firm Representative, which is of her life and government. For as Statuaes and Pictures are dumb histories, so histories are speaking Pictures. Wherein if my affection be not too great, or my reading too small, I am of this opinion, that if Plutarch were alive to write lives by parallels, it would trouble him for virtue and fortune both to find for her a parallel amongst women. And though she was of the passive sex, yet her government was so active, as, in my simple opinion, it made more impression upon the several states of Europe, than it received from thence. But I confess unto your Lordship I could not stay here, but went a little furder into the consideration of the times which have passed since King Henry the 8th; wherein I find the strangest variety that in like number of successions of any hereditary monarchy hath ever been known. The reign of a child; the offer of an usurpation (though it were but as a Diary Ague); the reign of a lady married to a foreign Prince; and the reign of a lady solitary and unmarried. So that as it cometh to pass in massive bodies, that they have certain trepidations and waverings before they fix and settle; so it seemeth that by the providence of God this monarchy, before it was to settle in his Majesty and his generations (in which I hope it is now established for ever), it had these prelusive changes in these barren princes. Neither could I contain myself here (as it is easier to produce than to stay a wish), but calling to remembrance the unworthiness of the history of England (in the main continuance thereof), and the partiality and obliquity of that of Scotland, in the latest and largest author that I have seen: I conceived it would be honor for his Majesty, and a work very memorable, if this island of Great Britain, as it is now joined in Monarchy for the ages to come, so were joined in History for the times past; and that one just and complete History were compiled of both nations. And if any man think it may refresh the memory of former discords, he may satisfy himself with the verse, « olim hæc meminisse juvabit: » for the case being now altered, it is matter of comfort and gratulation to remember former troubles.

Thus much, if it may please your Lordship, was in the optative mood. It is true that I did look a little in the potential; wherein the hope which I conceived was grounded upon three observations. The first, of the times, which do flourish in learning, both of art and language; which giveth hope not only that it may be done, but that it may be well done. For when good things are undertaken in ill times, it turneth but to loss; as in this very particular we have a fresh example of Polydore Vergile, who being designed to write the English History by K. Henry the 8th (a strange choice to chuse a stranger), and for his better instruction having obtained into his hands many registers and memorials out of the monasteries, did indeed deface and suppress better things than those he did collect and reduce. Secondly, I do see that which all the world seeth in his Majesty, both a wonderful judgment in learning and a singular affection towards learning, and the works of true honor which are of the mind and not of the hand. For there cannot be the like honor sought in the building of galleries, or the planting of elms along highways, and the like manufactures, things rather of magnificence than of magnanimity, as there is in the uniting of states, pacifying of controversies, nourishing and augmenting of learning and arts, and the particular actions appertaining unto these; of which kind Cicero judged truly, when he said to Cæsar, « Quantum operibus tuis detrahet vetustas, tantum addet laudibus. » And lastly, I called to mind, that your Lordship at sometimes hath been pleased to express unto me a great desire, that something of this nature should be performed; answerably indeed to your other noble and worthy courses and actions, wherein your Lordship sheweth yourself not only an excellent Chancellor and Counselor, but also an exceeding favorer and fosterer of all good learning and virtue, both in men and matters, persons and actions: joining and adding unto the great services towards his Majesty, which have, in small compass of time, been accumulated upon your Lordship, many other deservings both of the Church and Commonwealth and particulars; so as the opinion of so great and wise a man doth seem unto me a good warrant both of the possibility and worth of this matter. But all this while I assure myself, I cannot be mistaken by your Lordship, as if I sought an office or employment for myself. For no man knoweth better than your Lordship, that (if there were in me any faculty thereunto, as I am most unable), yet neither my fortune nor profession would permit it. But because there be so many good painters both for hand and colors, it needeth but encouragement and instructions to give life and light unto it.

So in all humbleness I conclude my presenting to your good Lordship this wish; that if it perish it is but a loss of that which is not. And thus craving pardon that I have taken so much time from your Lordship, I always remain

Your Lps. very humbly and much bounden

Fr. Bacon.

Gray's Inn, this 2d of April, 1605.

TO VILLIERS ON HIS PATENT AS VISCOUNT

From 'Letters and Life,' by James Spedding

Sir:

I have sent you now your patent of creation of Lord Blechly of Blechly, and of Viscount Villiers. Blechly is your own, and I like the sound of the name better than Whaddon; but the name will be hid, for you will be called Viscount Villiers. I have put them both in a patent, after the manner of the patents of Earls where baronies are joined; but the chief reason was, because I would avoid double prefaces which had not been fit; nevertheless the ceremony of robing and otherwise must be double.

And now, because I am in the country, I will send you some of my country fruits; which with me are good meditations; which when I am in the city are choked with business.

After that the King shall have watered your new dignities with his bounty of the lands which he intends you, and that some other things concerning your means which are now likewise in intention shall be settled upon you; I do not see but you may think your private fortunes established; and, therefore, it is now time that you should refer your actions chiefly to the good of your sovereign and your country. It is the life of an ox or beast always to eat, and never to exercise; but men are born (and especially Christian men), not to cram in their fortunes, but to exercise their virtues; and yet the other hath been the unworthy, and (thanks be to God) sometimes the unlucky humor of great persons in our times. Neither will your further fortune be the further off: for assure yourself that fortune is of a woman's nature, that will sooner follow you by slighting than by too much wooing. And in this dedication of yourself to the public, I recommend unto you principally that which I think was never done since I was born; and which not done hath bred almost a wilderness and solitude in the King's service; which is, that you countenance, and encourage, and advance able men and virtuous men, and meriting men in all kinds, degrees, and professions. For in the time of the Cecils, the father and the son, able men were by design and of purpose suppressed; and though of late choice goeth better both in church and commonwealth, yet money, and turn-serving, and cunning canvasses, and importunity prevail too much. And in places of moment rather make able and honest men yours, than advance those that are otherwise because they are yours. As for cunning and corrupt men, you must (I know) sometimes use them; but keep them at a distance; and let it appear that you make use of them, rather than that they lead you. Above all, depend wholly (next to God) upon the King; and be ruled (as hitherto you have been) by his instructions; for that is best for yourself. For the King's care and thoughts concerning you are according to the thoughts of a great King; whereas your thoughts concerning yourself are and ought to be according to the thoughts of a modest man. But let me not weary you. The sum is that you think goodness the best part of greatness; and that you remember whence your rising comes, and make return accordingly.

God ever keep you.

Gorhambury, August 12th, 1616

CHARGE TO JUSTICE HUTTON

From ‹Letters and Life,› by James Spedding

Mr. Serjeant Hutton:

The King's most excellent Majesty, being duly informed of your learning, integrity, discretion, experience, means, and reputation in your country, hath thought fit not to leave you these talents to be employed upon yourself only, but to call you to serve himself and his people, in the place of one of his Justices of the court of common pleas.

The court where you are to serve, is the local centre and heart of the laws of this realm. Here the subject hath his assurance by fines and recoveries. Here he hath his fixed and invariable remedies by *præcipes* and writs of right. Here Justice opens not by a by-gate of privilege, but by the great gate of the King's original writs out of the Chancery. Here issues process of outlawry; if men will not answer law in this centre of law, they shall be cast out of the circle of law. And therefore it is proper for you by all means with your wisdom and fortitude to maintain the laws of the realm. Wherein, nevertheless, I would not have you head-strong, but heart-strong; and to weigh and remember with yourself, that the twelve Judges of the realm are as the twelve lions under Solomon's throne; they must be lions, but yet lions, under the throne; they must shew their stoutness in elevating and bearing up the throne.

To represent unto you the lines and portraitures of a good judge:—The first is, That you should draw your learning out of your books, not out of your brain.

2. That you should mix well the freedom of your own opinion with the reverence of the opinion of your fellows.

3. That you should continue the studying of your books, and not to spend on upon the old stock.

4. That you should fear no man's face, and yet not turn stoutness into bravery.

5. That you should be truly impartial, and not so as men may see affection through fine carriage.

6. That you be a light to jurors to open their eyes, but not a guide to lead them by the noses.

7. That you affect not the opinion of pregnancy and expedition by an impatient and catching hearing of the counselors at the bar.

8. That your speech be with gravity, as one of the sages of the law; and not talkative, nor with impertinent flying out to show learning.

9. That your hands, and the hands of your hands (I mean those about you), be clean, and uncorrupt from gifts, from meddling in titles, and from serving of turns, be they of great ones or small ones.

10. That you contain the jurisdiction of the court within the ancient merestones, without removing the mark.

11. Lastly, That you carry such a hand over your ministers and clerks, as that they may rather be in awe of you, than presume upon you.

These and the like points of the duty of a Judge, I forbear to enlarge; for the longer I have lived with you, the shorter shall my speech be to you; knowing that you come so furnished and prepared with these good virtues, as whatsoever I shall say cannot be new unto you. And therefore I will say no more unto you at this time, but deliver you your patent.

A PRAYER, OR PSALM

From ‹Letters and Life,› by James Spedding

Most gracious Lord God, my merciful Father, from my youth up, my Creator, my Redeemer, my Comforter. Thou (O Lord) soundest and searchest the depths and secrets of all hearts; thou knowledgest the upright of heart, thou judgest the hypocrite, thou ponderest men's thoughts and doings as in a balance, thou measurest their intentions as with a line, vanity and crooked ways cannot be hid from thee.

Remember (O Lord) how thy servant hath walked before thee: remember what I have first sought, and what hath been principal in mine intentions. I have loved thy assemblies, I have mourned for the divisions of thy Church, I have delighted in the brightness of thy sanctuary. This vine which thy right hand hath planted in this nation, I have ever prayed unto thee that it might have the first and the latter rain; and that it might stretch her branches to the seas and to the floods. The state and bread of the poor and oppressed have been precious in mine eyes: I have hated all cruelty and hardness of heart: I have (though in a despised weed) procured the good of all men. If any have been mine enemies, I thought not of them; neither hath the sun almost set upon my displeasure; but I have been as a dove, free from superfluity of maliciousness. Thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more. I have sought thee in the courts, fields, and gardens, but I have found thee in thy temples.

Thousands have been my sins, and ten thousand my transgressions; but thy sanctifications have remained with me, and my heart, through thy grace, hath been an unquenched coal upon thy altar. O Lord, my strength, I have since my youth met with thee in all my ways, by thy fatherly compassions, by thy comfortable chastisements, and by thy most visible providence. As thy favors have increased upon me, so have thy corrections; so as thou hast been alway near me, O Lord; and ever as my worldly blessings were exalted, so secret darts from thee have pierced me; and when I have ascended before men, I have descended in humiliation before thee.

And now when I thought most of peace and honor, thy hand is heavy upon me, and hath humbled me, according to thy former loving-kindness, keeping me still in thy fatherly school, not as a bastard, but as a child. Just are thy judgments upon me for my sins, which are more in number than the sands of the sea, but have no proportion to thy mercies; for what are the sands of the sea, to the sea, earth, heavens? and all these are nothing to thy mercies.

Besides my innumerable sins, I confess before thee, that I am debtor to thee for the gracious talent of thy gifts and graces which I have neither put into a napkin, nor put it (as I ought) to exchangers, where it might have made best profit; but misspent it in things for which I was least fit; so as I may truly say, my soul hath been a stranger in the course of my pilgrimage. Be merciful into me (O Lord) for my Saviour's sake, and receive me unto thy bosom, or guide me in thy ways.

FROM THE ‹APOPHTHEGMS›

(7.) My Lo. of Essex, at the succor of Rhoan, made twenty-four knights, which at that time was a great matter. Divers of those gentlemen were of weak and small means; which when Queen Elizabeth heard, she said, «My Lo. mought have done well to have built his alms-house before he made his knights.»

21. Many men, especially such as affect gravity, have a manner after other men's speech to shake their heads. Sir Lionel Cranfield would say, «That it was as men shake a bottle, to see if there was any wit in their head or no.»

33. Bias was sailing, and there fell out a great tempest, and the mariners, that were wicked and dissolute fellows, called upon the gods; but Bias said to them, «Peace, let them not know ye are here.»

42. There was a Bishop that was somewhat a delicate person, and bathed twice a day. A friend of his said to him, «My lord, why do you bathe twice a day?» The Bishop answered, «Because I cannot conveniently bathe thrice.»

55. Queen Elizabeth was wont to say of her instructions to great officers, «That they were like to garments, strait at the first putting on, but did by and by wear loose enough.»

64. Sir Henry Wotton used to say, «That critics are like brushers of noblemen's clothes.»

66. Mr. Savill was asked by my lord of Essex his opinion touching poets; who answered my lord, «He thought them the best writers, next to those that write prose.»

85. One was saying, «That his great-grandfather and grandfather and father died at sea.» Said another that heard him, «And I were as you, I would never come at sea.» «Why, (saith he) where did your great-grandfather and grandfather and father die?» He answered, «Where but in their beds.» Saith the other, «And I were as you, I would never come in bed.»

97. Alonso of Arragon was wont to say, in commendation of age, That age appeared to be best in four things: «Old wood best to burn; old wine to drink; old friends to trust; and old authors to read.»

119. One of the fathers saith, «That there is but this difference between the death of old men and young men: that old men go to death, and death comes to young men.»

TRANSLATION OF THE 137TH PSALM

From ‹Works,› Vol. xiv.

WHENAS we sat all sad and desolate,
By Babylon upon the river's side,
Eased from the tasks which in our captive state
We were enforcèd daily to abide,
Our harps we had brought with us to the field,
Some solace to our heavy souls to yield.

But soon we found we failed of our account,
For when our minds some freedom did obtain,
Straightways the memory of Sion Mount
Did cause afresh our wounds to bleed again;
So that with present gifts, and future fears,
Our eyes burst forth into a stream of tears.

As for our harps, since sorrow struck them dumb,
We hanged them on the willow-trees were near;
Yet did our cruel masters to us come,
Asking of us some Hebrew songs to hear:
Taunting us rather in our misery,
Than much delighting in our melody.

Alas (said we) who can once force or frame
His grievèd and oppressèd heart to sing
The praises of Jehovah's glorious name,
In banishment, under a foreign king?
In Sion is his seat and dwelling-place,
Thence doth he shew the brightness of his face.

Hierusalem, where God his throne hath set,
Shall any hour absent thee from my mind?
Then let my right hand quite her skill forget,
Then let my voice and words no passage find;
Nay, if I do not thee prefer in all
That in the compass of my thoughts can fall.

Remember thou, O Lord, the cruel cry
Of Edom's children, which did ring and sound,
Inciting the Chaldean's cruelty,
«Down with it, down with it, even unto the ground.»
In that good day repay it unto them,
When thou shalt visit thy Hierusalem.

And thou, O Babylon, shalt have thy turn
By just revenge, and happy shall he be,
That thy proud walls and towers shall waste and burn,
And as thou didst by us, so do by thee.
Yea, happy he that takes thy children's bones,
And dasheth them against the pavement stones.

THE WORLD'S A BUBBLE

From ‹Works,› Vol. xiv.

The world's a bubble, and the life of man
less than a span;
In his conception wretched, from the womb
so to the tomb:
Curst from the cradle, and brought up to years
with cares and fears.
Who then to frail mortality shall trust,
But limns the water, or but writes in dust.

Yet since with sorrow here we live opprest,
what life is best?
Courts are but only superficial schools
to dandle fools.
The rural parts are turned into a den
of savage men.
And where's the city from all vice so free,
But may be termed the worst of all the three?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,
or pains his head.
Those that live single take it for a curse,
or do things worse.
Some would have children; those that have them moan,
or wish them gone.
What is it then to have or have no wife,
But single thraldom, or a double strife?

Our own affections still at home to please
is a disease:
To cross the seas to any foreign soil
perils and toil.
Wars with their noise affright us: when they cease,
we are worse in peace.
What then remains, but that we still should cry
Not to be born, or being born to die.

WALTER BAGEHOT

(1826–1877)

BY FORREST MORGAN

Walter Bagehot was born February 3d, 1826, at Langport, Somersetshire, England; and died there March 24th, 1877. He sprang on both sides from, and was reared in, a nest of wealthy bankers and ardent Liberals, steeped in political history and with London country houses where leaders of thought and politics resorted; and his mother's brother-in-law was Dr. Prichard the ethnologist. This heredity, progressive by disposition and conservative by trade, and this entourage, produced naturally enough a mind at once rapid of insight and cautious of judgment, devoted almost equally to business action and intellectual speculation, and on its speculative side turned toward the fields of political history and sociology.

Walter Bagehot

But there were equally important elements not traceable. His freshness of mental vision, the strikingly novel points of view from which he looked at every subject, was marvelous even in a century so fertile of varied independences: he complained that «the most galling of yokes is the tyranny of your next-door neighbor,» the obligation of thinking as he thinks. He had a keen, almost reckless wit and delicious buoyant humor, whose utterances never pall by repetition; few authors so abound in tenaciously quotable phrases and passages of humorous intellectuality. What is rarely found in connection with much humor, he had a sensitive dreaminess of nature, strongly poetic in feeling, whence resulted a large appreciation of the subtler classes of poetry; of which he was an acute and sympathizing critic. As part of this temperament, he had a strong bent toward mysticism,—in one essay he says flatly that «mysticism is true,»—which gave him a rare insight into the religious nature and some obscure problems of religious history; though he was too cool, scientific, and humorous to be a great theologian.

Above all, he had that instinct of selective art, in felicity of words and salience of ideas, which elevates writing into literature; which long after a thought has merged its being and use in those of wider scope, keeps it in separate remembrance and retains for its creator his due of credit through the artistic charm of the shape he gave it.

The result of a mixture of traits popularly thought incompatible, and usually so in reality, — a great relish for the driest business facts and a creative literary gift, — was absolutely unique. Bagehot explains the general sterility of literature as a guide to life by the fact that «so few people who can write know anything;» and began a reform in his own person, by applying all his highest faculties — the best not only of his thought but of his imagination and his literary skill — to the theme of his daily work, banking and business affairs and political economy. There have been many men of letters who were excellent business men and hard bargainers, sometimes indeed merchants or bankers, but they have held their literature as far as possible off the plane of their bread-winning; they have not used it to explain and decorate the latter and made that the motive of art. Bagehot loved business not alone as the born trader loves it, for its profit and its gratification of innate likings, — «business is really pleasanter than pleasure, though it does not look so,» he says in substance, — but as an artist loves a picturesque situation or a journalist a murder; it pleased his literary sense as material for analysis and composition. He had in a high degree that union of the practical and the musing faculties which in its (as yet) highest degree made Shakespeare; but even Shakespeare did not write dramas on how to make theatres pay, or sonnets on real-estate speculation.

Bagehot's career was determined, as usual, partly by character and partly by circumstances. He graduated at London University in 1848, and studied for and was called to the bar; but his father owned an interest in a rich old provincial bank and a good shipping business, and instead of the law he joined in their conduct. He had just before, however, passed a few months in France, including the time of Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* in December, 1851; and from Paris he wrote to the London Inquirer (a Unitarian weekly) a remarkable series of letters on that event and its immediate sequents, defending the usurpation vigorously and outlining his political creed, from whose main lines he swerved but little in after life. Waiving the question whether the defense was valid, — and like all first-rate minds, Bagehot is even more instructive when he is wrong than when he is right, because the wrong is sure to be almost right and the truth on its side neglected, — the letters are full of fresh, acute, and even profound ideas, sharp exposition of those primary objects of government which demagogues and buncombe legislators ignore, racy wit, sarcasm, and description (in one passage he rises for a moment into really blood-stirring rhetoric), and proofs of his capacity thus early for reducing the confused cross-currents of daily life to the operation of great embracing laws. No other writing of a youth of twenty-five on such subjects—or almost none—is worth remembering at all for its matter; while this is perennially wholesome and educative, as well as capital reading.

From this on he devoted most of his spare time to literature: that he found so much spare time, and produced so much of a high grade while winning respect as a business manager, proves the excellent quality of his business brain. He was one of the editors of the National Review, a very able and readable English quarterly, from its foundation in 1854 to its death in 1863, and wrote for it twenty literary, biographical, and theological papers, which are among his best titles to enduring remembrance, and are full of his choicest flavors, his wealth of thought, fun, poetic sensitiveness, and deep religious feeling of the needs of human nature. Previous to this, he had written some good articles for the Prospective Review, and he wrote some afterwards for the Fortnightly Review (including the series afterwards gathered into ‘Physics and Politics’), and other periodicals.

But his chief industry and most peculiar work was determined by his marriage in 1858 to the daughter of James Wilson, an ex-merchant who had founded the Economist as a journal of trade, banking, and investment, and made it prosperous and rather influential. Mr. Wilson was engaging in politics, where he rose to high office and would probably have ended in the Cabinet; but being sent to India to regulate its finances, died there in 1860. Bagehot thereupon took control of the paper, and *was* the paper until his death in 1877; and the position he gave it was as unique as his own. On banking, finance, taxation, and political economy in general his utterances had such weight that Chancellors of the Exchequer consulted him as to the revenues, and the London business world eagerly studied the paper for guidance. But he went far beyond this, and made it an unexampled force in politics and governmental science, personal to himself. For the first time a great political thinker applied his mind week by week to discussing the problems presented by passing politics, and expounding the drift and meaning of current events in his nation and the others which bore closest on it, as France and America. That he gained such a hearing was due not alone to his immense ability, and to a style carefully modeled on the conversation of business men with each other, but to his cool moderation and evident aloofness from party as party. He dissected each like a man of science: party was to him a tool and not a religion. He gibed at the Tories: but the Tories forgave him because he was half a Tory at heart,—he utterly distrusted popular instincts and was afraid of popular ignorance. He was rarely warm for the actual measures of the Liberals; but the Liberals knew that he intensely despised the pig-headed obstructiveness of the typical Tory, and had no kinship with the blind worshipers of the *status quo.* To natives and foreigners alike for many years the paper was single and invaluable: in it one could find set forth acutely and dispassionately the broad facts and the real purport of all great legislative proposals, free from the rant and mendacity, the fury and distortion, the prejudice and counter-prejudice of the party press.

An outgrowth of his treble position as banker, economic writer, and general littérateur, was his charming book 'Lombard Street.' Most writers know nothing about business, he sets forth, most business men cannot write, therefore most writing about business is either unreadable or untrue: he put all his literary gifts at its service, and produced a book as instructive as a trade manual and more delightful than most novels. Its luminous, easy, half-playful «business talk» is irresistibly captivating. It is a description and analysis of the London money market and its component parts,—the Bank of England, the joint-stock banks, the private banks, and the bill-brokers. It will live, however, as literature and as a picture, not as a banker's guide; as the vividest outline of business London, of the «great commerce» and the fabric of credit which is the basis of modern civilization and of which London is the centre, that the world has ever known.

Previous to this, the most widely known of his works—'The English Constitution,' much used as a text-book—had made a new epoch in political analysis, and placed him among the foremost thinkers and writers of his time. Not only did it revolutionize the accepted mode of viewing that governmental structure, but as a treatise on government in general its novel types of classification are now admitted commonplaces. Besides its main themes, the book is a great store of thought and suggestion on government, society, and human nature,—for as in all his works, he pours on his nominal subject a flood of illumination and analogy from the unlikeliest sources; and a piece of eminently pleasurable reading from end to end. Its basic novelty lay in what seems the most natural of inquiries, but which in fact was left for Bagehot's original mind even to think of,—the actual working of the governmental system in practice, as distinguished from legal theory. The result of this novel analysis was startling: old powers and checks went to the rubbish heap, and a wholly new set of machinery and even new springs of force and life were substituted. He argued that the actual use of the English monarchy is not to do the work of government, but through its roots in the past to gain popular loyalty and support for the real government, which the masses would not obey if they realized its genuine nature; that «it raises the army though it does not win the battle.» He showed that the function of the House of Peers is not as a co-ordinate power with the Commons (which is the real government), but as a revising body and an index of the strength of popular feeling. Constitutional governments he divides into Cabinet, where the people can change the government at any time, and therefore follow its acts and debates eagerly and instructedly; and Presidential, where they can only change it at fixed terms, and are therefore apathetic and ill-informed and care little for speeches which can effect nothing.

Just before 'Lombard Street' came his scientific masterpiece, 'Physics and Politics'; a work which does for human society what the 'Origin of Species' does for organic life, expounding its method of progress from very low if not the lowest forms to higher ones. Indeed, one of its main lines is only a special application of Darwin's «natural selection» to societies, noting the survival of the strongest (which implies in the long run the best developed in all virtues that make for social cohesion) through conflict; but the book is so much more than that, in spite of its heavy debt to all scientific and institutional research, that it remains a first-rate feat of original constructive thought. It is the more striking from its almost ludicrous brevity compared with the novelty, variety, and pregnancy of its ideas. It is scarcely more than a pamphlet; one can read it through in an evening: yet there is hardly any book which is a master-key to so many historical locks, so useful a standard for referring scattered sociological facts to, so clarifying to the mind in the study of early history. The work is strewn with fertile and suggestive observations from many branches of knowledge. Its leading idea of the needs and difficulties of early societies is given in one of the citations.

The unfinished 'Economic Studies' are partially a re-survey of the same ground on a more limited scale, and contain in addition a mass of the nicest and shrewdest observations on modern trade and society, full of truth and suggestiveness. All the other books printed under his name are collections either from the Economist or from outside publications.

As a thinker, Bagehot's leading positions may be roughly summarized thus: in history, that reasoning from the present to the past is generally wrong and frequently nonsense; in politics, that abstract systems are foolish, that a government which does not benefit its subjects has no rights against one that will, that the masses had much better let the upper ranks do the governing than meddle with it themselves, that all classes are too eager to act without thinking and ought not to attempt so much; in society, that democracy is an evil because it leaves no specially trained upper class to furnish models for refinement. But there is vastly more besides this, and his value lies much more in the mental clarification afforded by his details than in the new principles of action afforded by his generalizations. He leaves men saner, soberer, juster, with a clearer sense of perspective, of real issues, that more than makes up for a slight diminution of zeal.

As pure literature, the most individual trait in his writings sprang from his scorn of mere word-mongering divorced from actual life. «A man ought to have the right of being a Philistine if he chooses,» he tells us: «there is a sickly incompleteness in men too fine for the world and too nice to work their way through it.» A great man of letters, no one has ever mocked his craft so persistently. A great thinker, he never tired of humorously magnifying the active and belittling the intellectual temperament. Of course it was only half-serious: he admits the force and utility of colossal visionaries like Shelley, constructive scholars like Gibbon, ascetic artists like Milton, even light dreamers like Hartley Coleridge; indeed, intellectually he appreciates all intellectual force, and scorns feeble thought which has the effrontery to show itself, and those who are «cross with the agony of a new idea.» But his heart goes out to the unscholarly Cavalier with his dash and his loyalty, to the county member who «hardly reads two books per existence,» and even to the rustic who sticks to his old ideas and whom «it takes seven weeks to comprehend an atom of a new one.» A petty surface consistency must not be exacted from the miscellaneous utterances of a humorist: all sorts of complementary half-truths are part of his service. His own quite just conception of humor, as meaning merely full vision and balanced judgment, is his best defense: «when a man has attained the deep conception that there is such a thing as nonsense,» he says, «you may be sure of him for ever after.» At bottom he is thoroughly consistent: holding that the masses should work in contented deference to their intellectual guides, but those guides should qualify themselves by practical experience of life, that poetry is not an amusement for lazy sybarites but the most elevating of spiritual influences, that religions cut the roots of their power by trying to avoid supernaturalism and cultivate intelligibility, and that the animal basis of human life is a screen expressly devised to shut off direct knowledge of God and make character possible.

To make his acquaintance first is to enter upon a store of high and fine enjoyment, and of strong and vivifying thought, which one must be either very rich of attainment or very feeble of grasp to find unprofitable or pleasureless.

Forrest Morgan,

THE VIRTUES OF STUPIDITY

From ‹Letters on the French Coup d'État›

I FEAR you will laugh when I tell you what I conceive to be about the most essential mental quality for a free people whose liberty is to be progressive, permanent, and on a large scale: it is much stupidity. Not to begin by wounding any present susceptibilities, let me take the Roman character; for with one great exception, — I need not say to whom I allude, — they are the great political people of history. Now, is not a certain dullness their most visible characteristic? What is the history of their speculative mind? a blank; what their literature? a copy. They have left not a single discovery in any abstract science, not a single perfect or well-formed work of high imagination. The Greeks, the perfection of human and accomplished genius, bequeathed to mankind the ideal forms of self-idolizing art, the Romans imitated and admired; the Greeks explained the laws of nature, the Romans wondered and despised; the Greeks invented a system of numerals second only to that now in use, the Romans counted to the end of their days with the clumsy apparatus which we still call by their name; the Greeks made a capital and scientific calendar, the Romans began their month when the Pontifex Maximus happened to spy out the new moon. Throughout Latin literature, this is the perpetual puzzle: — Why are we free and they slaves, we prætors and they barbers? why do the stupid people always win and the clever people always lose? I need not say that in real sound stupidity the English are unrivaled: you'll hear more wit and better wit in an Irish street row than would keep Westminster Hall in humor for five weeks.

. . . .

In fact, what we opprobriously call «stupidity,» though not an enlivening quality in common society, is nature's favorite resource for preserving steadiness of conduct and consistency of opinion; it enforces concentration: people who learn slowly, learn only what they must. The best security for people's doing their duty is, that they should not know anything else to do; the best security for fixedness of opinion is, that people should be incapable of comprehending what is to be said on the other side. These valuable truths are no discoveries of mine: they are familiar enough to people whose business it is to know them. Hear what a douce and aged attorney says of your peculiarly promising barrister:—"Sharp? Oh, yes! he's too sharp by half. He is not *safe*, not a minute, isn't that young man." I extend this, and advisedly maintain that nations, just as individuals, may be too clever to be practical and not dull enough to be free. . . .

And what I call a proper stupidity keeps a man from all the defects of this character: it chains the gifted possessor mainly to his old ideas, it takes him seven weeks to comprehend an atom of a new one; it keeps him from being led away by new theories, for there is nothing which bores him so much; it restrains him within his old pursuits, his well-known habits, his tried expedients, his verified conclusions, his traditional beliefs. He is not tempted to levity or impatience, for he does not see the joke and is thick-skinned to present evils. Inconsistency puts him out: "What I says is this here, as I was a-saying yesterday," is his notion of historical eloquence and habitual discretion. He is very slow indeed to be excited,—his passions, his feelings, and his affections are dull and tardy strong things, falling in a certain known direction, fixed on certain known objects, and for the most part acting in a moderate degree and at a sluggish pace. You always know where to find his mind. Now, this is exactly what (in politics at least) you do not know about a Frenchman.

REVIEW WRITING

From 'The First Edinburgh Reviewers'

Review writing exemplifies the casual character of modern literature: everything about it is temporary and fragmentary. Look at a railway stall: you see books of every color,—blue, yellow, crimson, "ring-streaked, speckled, and spotted,"—on every subject, in every style, of every opinion, with every conceivable difference, celestial or sublunary, maleficent, beneficent—but all small. People take their literature in morsels, as they take sandwiches on a journey. . . .

And the change in appearance of books has been accompanied—has been caused—by a similar change in readers. What a transition from the student of former ages! from a grave man with grave cheeks and a considerate eye, who spends his life in study, has no interest in the outward world, hears nothing of its din and cares nothing for its honors, who would gladly learn and gladly teach, whose whole soul is taken up with a few books of ‘Aristotle and his Philosophy,’—to the merchant in the railway, with a head full of sums, an idea that tallow is «up,» a conviction that teas are «lively,» and a mind reverting perpetually from the little volume which he reads to these mundane topics, to the railway, to the shares, to the buying and bargaining universe. We must not wonder that the outside of books is so different, when the inner nature of those for whom they are written is so changed.

In this transition from ancient writing to modern, the review-like essay and the essay-like review fill a large space. Their small bulk, their slight pretension to systematic completeness,—their avowal, it might be said, of necessary incompleteness,—the facility of changing the subject, of selecting points to attack, of exposing only the best corner for defense, are great temptations. Still greater is the advantage of «our limits.» A real reviewer always spends his first and best pages on the parts of a subject on which he wishes to write, the easy comfortable parts which he knows. The formidable difficulties which he acknowledges, you foresee by a strange fatality that he will only reach two pages before the end; to his great grief, there is no opportunity for discussing them. As a young gentleman at the India House examination wrote «Time up» on nine unfinished papers in succession, so you may occasionally read a whole review, in every article of which the principal difficulty of each successive question is about to be reached at the conclusion. Nor can any one deny that this is the suitable skill, the judicious custom of the craft.

LORD ELDON

From ‘The First Edinburgh Reviewers’

As for Lord Eldon, it is the most difficult thing in the world to believe that there ever was such a man; it only shows how intense historical evidence is, that no one really doubts it. He believed in everything which it is impossible to believe in,—in the danger of Parliamentary Reform, the danger of Catholic Emancipation, the danger of altering the Court of Chancery, the danger of altering the courts of law, the danger of abolishing capital punishment for trivial thefts, the danger of making land-owners pay their debts, the danger of making anything more, the danger of making anything less. It seems as if he maturely thought, «Now, I know the present state of things to be consistent with the existence of John Lord Eldon; but if we begin altering that state, I am sure I do not know that it will be consistent.» As Sir Robert Walpole was against all committees of inquiry on the simple ground, «If they once begin that sort of thing, who knows who will be safe?» so that great Chancellor (still remembered in his own scene) looked pleasantly down from the woolsack, and seemed to observe, «Well, it *is* a queer thing that I should be here, and here I mean to stay.»

TASTE

From ‹Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning›

There is a most formidable and estimable *insane* taste. The will has great though indirect power over the taste, just as it has over the belief. There are some horrid beliefs from which human nature revolts, from which at first it shrinks, to which at first no effort can force it. But if we fix the mind upon them, they have a power over us, just because of their natural offensiveness. They are like the sight of human blood. Experienced soldiers tell us that at first, men are sickened by the smell and newness of blood, almost to death and fainting; but that as soon as they harden their hearts and stiffen their minds, as soon as they *will* bear it, then comes an appetite for slaughter, a tendency to gloat on carnage, to love blood (at least for the moment) with a deep, eager love. It is a principle that if we put down a healthy instinctive aversion, nature avenges herself by creating an unhealthy insane attraction. For this reason, the most earnest truth-seeking men fall into the worst delusions. They will not let their mind alone; they force it toward some ugly thing, which a crotchet of argument, a conceit of intellect recommends: and nature punishes their disregard of her warning by subjection to the ugly one, by belief in it. Just so, the most industrious critics get the most admiration. They think it unjust to rest in their instinctive natural horror; they overcome it, and angry nature gives them over to ugly poems and marries them to detestable stanzas.

CAUSES OF THE STERILITY OF LITERATURE

From ‹Shakespeare, the Man,› etc.

The reason why so few good books are written is, that so few people that can write know anything. In general, an author has always lived in a room, has read books, has cultivated science, is acquainted with the style and sentiments of the best authors, but he is out of the way of employing his own eyes and ears. He has nothing to hear and nothing to see. His life is a vacuum. The mental habits of Robert Southey, which about a year ago were so extensively praised in the public journals, are the type of literary existence, just as the praise bestowed on them shows the admiration excited by them among literary people. He wrote poetry (as if anybody could) before breakfast; he read during breakfast. He wrote history until dinner; he corrected proof-sheets between dinner and tea; he wrote an essay for the Quarterly afterwards; and after supper, by way of relaxation, composed ‹The Doctor›—a lengthy and elaborate jest. Now, what can any one think of such a life?—except how clearly it shows that the habits best fitted for communicating information, formed with the best care, and daily regulated by the best motives, are exactly the habits which are likely to afford a man the least information to communicate. Southey had no events, no experiences. His wife kept house and allowed him pocket-money, just as if he had been a German professor devoted to accents, tobacco, and the dates of Horace's amours. . . .

The critic in the ‹Vicar of Wakefield› lays down that you should *always* say that the picture would have been better if the painter had taken more pains; but in the case of the practiced literary man, you should often enough say that the writings would have been much better if the writer had taken less pains. He says he has devoted his life to the subject; the reply is, «Then you have taken the best way to prevent your making anything of it. Instead of reading studiously what Burgersdicius and Ænesidemus said men were, you should have gone out yourself and seen (if you can see) what they are.» But there is a whole class of minds which prefer the literary delineation of objects to the actual eyesight of them. Such a man would naturally think literature more instructive than life. Hazlitt said of Mackintosh, "He might like to read an *account* of India; but India itself, with its burning, shining face, would be a mere blank, an endless waste to him. Persons of this class have no more to say to a matter of fact staring them in the face, without a label in its mouth, than they would to a hippopotamus." . . .

After all, the original way of writing books may turn out to be the best. The first author, it is plain, could not have taken anything from books, since there were no books for him to copy from; he looked at things for himself. Anyhow the modern system fails, for where are the amusing books from voracious students and habitual writers?

Moreover, in general, it will perhaps be found that persons devoted to mere literature commonly become devoted to mere idleness. They wish to produce a great work, but they find they cannot. Having relinquished everything to devote themselves to this, they conclude on trial that this is impossible; they wish to write, but nothing occurs to them: therefore they write nothing and they do nothing. As has been said, they have nothing to do; their life has no events, unless they are very poor; with any decent means of subsistence, they have nothing to rouse them from an indolent and musing dream. A merchant must meet his bills, or he is civilly dead and uncivilly remembered; but a student may know nothing of time, and be too lazy to wind up his watch.

THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

From ‹William Cowper›

If there be any truly painful fact about the world now tolerably well established by ample experience and ample records, it is that an intellectual and indolent happiness is wholly denied to the children of men. That most valuable author, Lucretius, who has supplied us and others with an almost inexhaustible supply of metaphors on this topic, ever dwells on the life of his gods with a sad and melancholy feeling that no such life was possible on a crude and cumbersome earth. In general, the two opposing agencies are marriage and lack of money; either of these breaks the lot of literary and refined inaction at once and forever. The first of these, as we have seen, Cowper had escaped; his reserved and negligent reveries were still free, at least from the invasion of affection. To this invasion, indeed, there is commonly requisite the acquiescence or connivance of mortality; but all men are born — not free and equal, as the Americans maintain, but, in the Old World at least — basely subjected to the yoke of coin. It is in vain that in this hemisphere we endeavor after impecuniary fancies. In bold and eager youth we go out on our travels: we visit Baalbec and Paphos and Tadmor and Cythera,— ancient shrines and ancient empires, seats of eager love or gentle inspiration; we wander far and long; we have nothing to do with our fellow-men, — what are we, indeed, to diggers and counters? we wander far, we dream to wander forever — but we dream in vain. A surer force than the subtlest fascination of fancy is in operation; the purse-strings tie us to our kind. Our travel coin runs low, and we must return, away from Tadmor and Baalbec, back to our steady, tedious industry and dull work, to «la vieille Europe» (as Napoleon said), «qui m'ennuie.» It is the same in thought: in vain we seclude ourselves in elegant chambers, in fascinating fancies, in refined reflections.

ON EARLY READING

From ‘Edward Gibbon’

In school work Gibbon had uncommon difficulties and unusual deficiencies; but these were much more than counterbalanced by a habit which often accompanies a sickly childhood, and is the commencement of a studious life,— the habit of desultory reading. The instructiveness of this is sometimes not comprehended. S. T. Coleridge used to say that he felt a great superiority over those who had not read — and fondly read — fairy tales in their childhood: he thought they wanted a sense which he possessed, the perception, or apperception — we do not know which he used to say it was — of the unity and wholeness of the universe. As to fairy tales, this is a hard saying; but as to desultory reading, it is certainly true. Some people have known a time in life when there was no book they could not read. The fact of its being a book went immensely in its favor. In early life there is an opinion that the obvious thing to do with a horse is to ride it; with a cake, to eat it; with sixpence, to spend it. A few boys carry this further, and think the natural thing to do with a book is to read it. There is an argument from design in the subject: if the book was not meant for that purpose, for what purpose was it meant? Of course, of any understanding of the works so perused there is no question or idea. There is a legend of Bentham, in his earliest childhood, climbing to the height of a huge stool, and sitting there evening after evening, with two candles, engaged in the perusal of Rapin's history; it might as well have been any other book. The doctrine of utility had not then dawned on its immortal teacher; *cui bono* was an idea unknown to him. He would have been ready to read about Egypt, about Spain, about coals in Borneo, the teak-wood in India, the current in the River Mississippi, on natural history or human history, on theology or morals, on the state of the Dark Ages or the state of the Light Ages, on Augustulus or Lord Chatham, on the first century or the seventeenth, on the moon, the millennium, or the whole duty of man. Just then, reading is an end in itself. At that time of life you no more think of a future consequence — of the remote, the very remote possibility of deriving knowledge from the perusal of a book, than you expect so great a result from spinning a peg-top. You spin the top, and you read the book; and these scenes of life are exhausted. In such studies, of all prose, perhaps the best is history: one page is so like another, battle No. 1 is so much on a par with battle No. 2. Truth may be, as they say, stranger than fiction, abstractedly; but in actual books, novels are certainly odder and more astounding than correct history.

It will be said, What is the use of this? why not leave the reading of great books till a great age? why plague and perplex childhood with complex facts remote from its experience and inapprehensible by its imagination? The reply is, that though in all great and combined facts there is much which childhood cannot thoroughly imagine, there is also in very many a great deal which can only be truly apprehended for the first time at that age. Youth has a principle of consolidation; we begin with the whole. Small sciences are the labors of our manhood; but the round universe is the plaything of the boy. His fresh mind shoots out vaguely and crudely into the infinite and eternal. Nothing is hid from the depth of it; there are no boundaries to its vague and wandering vision. Early science, it has been said, begins in utter nonsense; it would be truer to say that it starts with boyish fancies. How absurd seem the notions of the first Greeks! Who could believe now that air or water was the principle, the pervading substance, the eternal material of all things? Such affairs will never explain a thick rock. And what a white original for a green and sky-blue world! Yet people disputed in these ages not whether it was either of those substances, but which of them it was. And doubtless there was a great deal, at least in quantity, to be said on both sides. Boys are improved; but some in our own day have asked, «Mamma, I say, what did God make the world of?» and several, who did not venture on speech, have had an idea of some one gray primitive thing, felt a difficulty as to how the red came, and wondered that marble could *ever* have been the same as moonshine. This is in truth the picture of life. We begin with the infinite and eternal, which we shall never apprehend; and these form a framework, a schedule, a set of co-ordinates to which we refer all which we learn later. At first, like the old Greek, «We look up to the whole sky, and are lost in the one and the all;» in the end we classify and enumerate, learn each star, calculate distances, draw cramped diagrams on the unbounded sky, write a paper on *α* Cygni and a treatise on ε Draconis, map special facts upon the indefinite void, and engrave precise details on the infinite and everlasting. So in history: somehow the whole comes in boyhood, the details later and in manhood. The wonderful series, going far back to the times of old patriarchs with their flocks and herds, the keen-eyed Greek, the stately Roman, the watching Jew, the uncouth Goth, the horrid Hun, the settled picture of the unchanging East, the restless shifting of the rapid West, the rise of the cold and classical civilization, its fall, the rough impetuous Middle Ages, the vague warm picture of ourselves and home, — when did we learn these? Not yesterday nor to-day: but long ago, in the first dawn of reason, in the original flow of fancy. What we learn afterwards are but the accurate littlenesses of the great topic, the dates and tedious facts. Those who begin late learn only these; but the happy first feel the mystic associations and the progress of the whole. . . .

However exalted may seem the praises which we have given to loose and unplanned reading, we are not saying that it is the sole ingredient of a good education. Besides this sort of education, which some boys will voluntarily and naturally give themselves, there needs, of course, another and more rigorous kind, which must be impressed upon them from without. The terrible difficulty of early life — the *use* of pastors and masters really is, that they compel boys to a distinct mastery of that which they do not wish to learn. There is nothing to be said for a preceptor who is not dry. Mr. Carlyle describes, with bitter satire, the fate of one of his heroes who was obliged to acquire whole systems of information in which he, the hero, saw no use, and which he kept, as far as might be, in a vacant corner of his mind. And this is the very point: dry language, tedious mathematics, a thumbed grammar, a detested slate form gradually an interior separate intellect, exact in its information, rigid in its requirements, disciplined in its exercises. The two grow together; the early natural fancy touching the far extremities of the universe, lightly playing with the scheme of all things; the precise, compacted memory slowly accumulating special facts, exact habits, clear and painful conceptions. At last, as it were in a moment, the cloud breaks up, the division sweeps away; we find that in fact these exercises which puzzled us, these languages which we hated, these details which we despised, are the instruments of true thought; are the very keys and openings, the exclusive access to the knowledge which we loved.

THE CAVALIERS

From ‹Thomas Babington Macaulay›

What historian has ever estimated the Cavalier character? There is Clarendon, the grave, rhetorical, decorous lawyer, piling words, congealing arguments; very stately, a little grim. There is Hume, the Scotch metaphysician, who has made out the best case for such people as never were, for a Charles who never died, for a Strafford who would never have been attainted; a saving, calculating North-countryman, fat, impassive, who lived on eightpence a day. What have these people to do with an enjoying English gentleman? It is easy for a doctrinaire to bear a post-mortem examination, — it is much the same whether he be alive or dead; but not so with those who live during their life, whose essence is existence, whose being is in animation. There seem to be some characters who are not made for history, as there are some who are not made for old age. A Cavalier is always young. The buoyant life arises before us, rich in hope, strong in vigor, irregular in action; men young and ardent, «framed in the prodigality of nature»; open to every enjoyment, alive to every passion, eager, impulsive; brave without discipline, noble without principle; prizing luxury, despising danger; capable of high sentiment, but in each of whom the

> «Addiction was to courses vain,
> His companies unlettered, rude, and shallow,
> His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports,
> And never noted in him any study,
> Any retirement, any sequestration
> From open haunts and popularity.»

We see these men setting forth or assembling to defend their king or church, and we see it without surprise; a rich daring loves danger, a deep excitability likes excitement. If we look around us, we may see what is analogous: some say that the battle of the Alma was won by the «uneducated gentry»; the «uneducated gentry» would be Cavaliers now. The political sentiment is part of the character; the essence of Toryism is enjoyment. Talk of the ways of spreading a wholesome conservatism throughout this country! Give painful lectures, distribute weary tracts (and perhaps this is as well,—you may be able to give an argumentative answer to a few objections, you may diffuse a distinct notion of the dignified dullness of politics); but as far as communicating and establishing your creed are concerned, try a little pleasure. The way to keep up old customs is to enjoy old customs; the way to be satisfied with the present state of things is to enjoy that state of things. Over the «Cavalier» mind this world passes with a thrill of delight; there is an exaltation in a daily event, zest in the «regular thing,» joy at an old feast.

MORALITY AND FEAR

From ‹Bishop Butler›

THE moral principle (whatever may be said to the contrary by complacent thinkers) is really and to most men a principle of fear. The delights of a good conscience may be reserved for better things, but few men who know themselves will say that they have often felt them by vivid and actual experience; a sensation of shame, of reproach, of remorse, of sin (to use the word we instinctively shrink from because it expresses the meaning), is what the moral principle really and practically thrusts on most men. Conscience is the condemnation of ourselves; we expect a penalty. As the Greek proverb teaches, "where there is shame there is fear"; where there is the deep and intimate anxiety of guilt,—the feeling which has driven murderers and other than murderers forth to wastes and rocks and stones and tempests,—we see, as it were, in a single complex and indivisible sensation, the pain and sense of guilt and the painful anticipation of its punishment. How to be free from this, is the question; how to get loose from this; how to be rid of the secret tie which binds the strong man and cramps his pride, and makes him angry at the beauty of the universe,—which will not let him go forth like a great animal, like the king of the forest, in the glory of his might, but restrains him with an inner fear and a secret foreboding that if he do but exalt himself he shall be abased, if he do but set forth his own dignity he will offend ONE who will deprive him of it. This, as has often been pointed out, is the source of the bloody rites of heathendom. You are going to battle, you are going out in the bright sun with dancing plumes and glittering spear; your shield shines, and your feathers wave, and your limbs are glad with the consciousness of strength, and your mind is warm with glory and renown; with coming glory and unobtained renown: for who are you to hope for these; who are *you* to go forth proudly against the pride of the sun, with your secret sin and your haunting shame and your real fear? First lie down and abase yourself; strike your back with hard stripes; cut deep with a sharp knife, as if you would eradicate the consciousness; cry aloud; put ashes on your head; bruise yourself with stones,—then perhaps God may pardon you. Or, better still (so runs the incoherent feeling), give him something—your ox, your ass, whole hecatombs if you are rich enough; anything, it is but a chance,—you do not know what will please him; at any rate, what you love best yourself,—that is, most likely, your first-born son. Then, after such gifts and such humiliation, he may be appeased, he may let you off; he may without anger let you go forth, Achilles-like, in the glory of your shield; he may *not* send you home as he would else, the victim of rout and treachery, with broken arms and foul limbs, in weariness and humiliation. Of course, it is not this kind of fanaticism that we impute to a prelate of the English Church; human sacrifices are not respectable, and Achilles was not rector of Stanhope. But though the costume and circumstances of life change, the human heart does not; its feelings remain. The same anxiety, the same consciousness of personal sin which led in barbarous times to what has been described, show themselves in civilized life as well. In this quieter period, their great manifestation is scrupulosity: a care about the ritual of life; an attention to meats and drinks, and «cups and washings.» Being so unworthy as we are, feeling what we feel, abased as we are abased, who shall say that those are beneath us? In ardent, imaginative youth they may seem so; but let a few years come, let them dull the will or contract the heart or stain the mind; then the consequent feeling will be, as all experience shows, not that a ritual is too mean, too low, too degrading for human nature, but that it is a mercy we have to do no more,—that we have only to wash in Jordan, that we have not even to go out into the unknown distance to seek for Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus. We have no right to judge; we cannot decide; we must do what is laid down for us,—we fail daily even in this; we must never cease for a moment in our scrupulous anxiety to omit by no tittle and to exceed by no iota.

THE TYRANNY OF CONVENTION

From ‹Sir Robert Peel›

It might be said that this [necessity for newspapers and statesmen of following the crowd] is only one of the results of that tyranny of commonplace which seems to accompany civilization. You may talk of the tyranny of Nero and Tiberius; but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbor. What law is so cruel as the law of doing what he does? What yoke is so galling as the necessity of being like him? What espionage of despotism comes to your door so effectually as the eye of the man who lives at your door? Public opinion is a permeating influence, and it exacts obedience to itself; it requires us to think other men's thoughts, to speak other men's words, to follow other men's habits. Of course, if we do not, no formal ban issues; no corporeal pain, no coarse penalty of a barbarous society is inflicted on the offender; but we are called «eccentric»; there is a gentle murmur of «most unfortunate ideas,» «singular young man,» «well-intentioned, I dare say; but unsafe, sir, quite unsafe.»

Whatever truth there may be in these splenetic observations might be expected to show itself more particularly in the world of politics: people dread to be thought unsafe in proportion as they get their living by being thought to be safe. Those who desire a public career must look to the views of the living public; an immediate exterior influence is essential to the exertion of their faculties. The confidence of others is your *fulcrum:* you cannot — many people wish you could — go into Parliament to represent yourself; you must conform to the opinions of the electors, and they, depend on it, will not be original. In a word, as has been most wisely observed, «under free institutions it is necessary occasionally to defer to the opinions of other people; and as other people are obviously in the wrong, this is a great hindrance to the improvement of our political system and the progress of our species.»

HOW TO BE AN INFLUENTIAL POLITICIAN

From ‹Bolingbroke›

It is very natural that brilliant and vehement men should depreciate Harley; for he had nothing which they possess, but had everything which they commonly do not possess. He was by nature a moderate man. In that age they called such a man a «trimmer,» but they called him ill: such a man does not consciously shift or purposely trim his course,— he firmly believes that he is substantially consistent. «I do not wish in this House,» he would say in our age, «to be a party to any extreme course. Mr. Gladstone brings forward a great many things which I cannot understand; I assure you he does. There is more in that bill of his about tobacco than he thinks; I am confident there is. Money is a serious thing, a *very* serious thing. And I am sorry to say Mr. Disraeli commits the party very much: he avows sentiments which are injudicious; I cannot go along with him, nor can Sir John. He was not taught the catechism; I know he was not. There is a want in him of sound and sober religion,— and Sir John agrees with me,— which would keep him from distressing the clergy, who are very important. Great orators are very well; but as I said, how is the revenue? And the point is, not be led away, and to be moderate, and not to go to an extreme. As soon as it seems *very* clear, then I begin to doubt. I have been many years in Parliament, and that is my experience.» We may laugh at such speeches, but there have been plenty of them in every English Parliament. A great English divine has been described as always leaving out the principle upon which his arguments rested; even if it was stated to him, he regarded it as far-fetched and extravagant. Any politician who has this temper of mind will always have many followers; and he may be nearly sure that all great measures will be passed more nearly as he wishes them to be passed than as great orators wish. Nine-tenths of mankind are more afraid of violence than of anything else; and inconsistent moderation is always popular, because of all qualities it is most opposite to violence,—most likely to preserve the present safe existence.

CONDITIONS OF CABINET GOVERNMENT

From ‹The English Constitution›

THE conditions of fitness are two: first, you must get a good legislature; and next, you must keep it good. And these are by no means so nearly connected as might be thought at first sight. To keep a legislature efficient, it must have a sufficient supply of substantial business: if you employ the best set of men to do nearly nothing, they will quarrel with each other about that nothing; where great questions end, little parties begin. And a very happy community, with few new laws to make, few old bad laws to repeal, and but simple foreign relations to adjust, has great difficulty in employing a legislature,—there is nothing for it to enact and nothing for it to settle. Accordingly, there is great danger that the legislature, being debarred from all other kinds of business, may take to quarreling about its elective business; that controversies as to ministries may occupy all its time, and yet that time be perniciously employed; that a constant succession of feeble administrations, unable to govern and unfit to govern, may be substituted for the proper result of cabinet government, a sufficient body of men long enough in power to evince their sufficiency. The exact amount of non-elective business necessary for a parliament which is to elect the executive cannot, of course, be formally stated,—there are no numbers and no statistics in the theory of constitutions; all we can say is, that a parliament with little business, which is to be as efficient as a parliament with much business, must be in all other respects much better. An indifferent parliament may be much improved by the steadying effect of grave affairs; but a parliament which has no such affairs must be intrinsically excellent, or it will fail utterly.

But the difficulty of keeping a good legislature is evidently secondary to the difficulty of first getting it. There are two kinds of nations which can elect a good parliament. The first is a nation in which the mass of the people are intelligent, and in which they are comfortable. Where there is no honest poverty, where education is diffused and political intelligence is common, it is easy for the mass of the people to elect a fair legislature. The ideal is roughly realized in the North American colonies of England, and in the whole free States of the Union: in these countries there is no such thing as honest poverty,—physical comfort, such as the poor cannot imagine here, is there easily attainable by healthy industry; education is diffused much, and is fast spreading,—ignorant emigrants from the Old World often prize the intellectual advantages of which they are themselves destitute, and are annoyed at their inferiority in a place where rudimentary culture is so common. The greatest difficulty of such new communities is commonly geographical: the population is mostly scattered; and where population is sparse, discussion is difficult. But in a country very large as we reckon in Europe, a people really intelligent, really educated, really comfortable, would soon form a good opinion. No one can doubt that the New England States, if they were a separate community, would have an education, a political capacity, and an intelligence such as the numerical majority of no people equally numerous has ever possessed: in a State of this sort, where all the community is fit to choose a sufficient legislature, it is possible, it is almost easy, to create that legislature. If the New England States possessed a cabinet government as a separate nation, they would be as renowned in the world for political sagacity as they now are for diffused happiness.

WHY EARLY SOCIETIES COULD NOT BE FREE

From ‹Physics and Politics›

I BELIEVE the general description in which Sir John Lubbock sums up his estimate of the savage mind suits the patriarchal mind: «Savages,» he says, «have the character of children with the passions and strength of men.» . . .

And this is precisely what we should expect. «An inherited drill,» science says, «makes modern nations what they are; their born structure bears the trace of the laws of their fathers:» but the ancient nations came into no such inheritance,—they were the descendants of people who did what was right in their own eyes; they were born to no tutored habits, no preservative bonds, and therefore they were at the mercy of every impulse and blown by every passion. . . .

Again, I at least cannot call up to myself the loose conceptions (as they must have been) of morals which then existed. If we set aside all the element derived from law and polity which runs through our current moral notions, I hardly know what we shall have left. The residuum was somehow and in some vague way intelligible to the ante-political man; but it must have been uncertain, wavering, and unfit to be depended upon. In the best cases it existed much as the vague feeling of beauty now exists in minds sensitive but untaught,—a still small voice of uncertain meaning, an unknown something modifying everything else and higher than anything else, yet in form so indistinct that when you looked for it, it was gone; or if this be thought the delicate fiction of a later fancy, then morality was at least to be found in the wild spasms of «wild justice,» half punishment, half outrage: but anyhow, being unfixed by steady law, it was intermittent, vague, and hard for us to imagine. . . .

To sum up:—*Law*—rigid, definite, concise law—is the primary want of early mankind; that which they need above anything else, that which is requisite before they can gain anything else. But it is their greatest difficulty as well as their first requisite; the thing most out of their reach as well as that most beneficial to them if they reach it. In later ages, many races have gained much of this discipline quickly though painfully,—a loose set of scattered clans has been often and often forced to substantial settlement by a rigid conqueror; the Romans did half the work for above half Europe. But where could the first ages find Romans or a conqueror? men conquer by the power of government, and it was exactly government which then was not. The first ascent of civilization was at a steep gradient, though when now we look down upon it, it seems almost nothing.

How the step from no polity to polity was made, distinct history does not record. . . . But when once polities were begun, there is no difficulty in explaining why they lasted. Whatever may be said against the principle of «natural selection» in other departments, there is no doubt of its predominance in early human history: the strongest killed out the weakest as they could. And I need not pause to prove that any form of polity is more efficient than none; that an aggregate of families owning even a slippery allegiance to a single head would be sure to have the better of a set of families acknowledging no obedience to any one, but scattering loose about the world and fighting where they stood. Homer's Cyclops would be powerless against the feeblest band; so far from its being singular that we find no other record of that state of man, so unstable and sure to perish was it that we should rather wonder at even a single vestige lasting down to the age when for picturesqueness it became valuable in poetry.

But though the origin of polity is dubious, we are upon the *terra firma* of actual records when we speak of the preservation of polities. Perhaps every young Englishman who comes nowadays to Aristotle or Plato is struck with their conservatism: fresh from the liberal doctrines of the present age, he wonders at finding in those recognized teachers so much contrary teaching. They both, unlike as they are, hold with Xenophon so unlike both, that man is «the hardest of all animals to govern.» Of Plato it might indeed be plausibly said that the adherents of an intuitive philosophy, being «the Tories of speculation,» have commonly been prone to conservatism in government; but Aristotle, the founder of the experience philosophy, ought according to that doctrine to have been a Liberal if any one ever was a Liberal. In fact, both of these men lived when men «had not had time to forget» the difficulties of government: we have forgotten them altogether. We reckon as the basis of our culture upon an amount of order, of tacit obedience, of prescriptive governability, which these philosophers hoped to get as a principal result of their culture; we take without thought as a *datum* what they hunted as a *quæsitum.*

In early times the quantity of government is much more important than its quality. What you want is a comprehensive rule binding men together, making them do much the same things, telling them what to expect of each other,—fashioning them alike and keeping them so: what this rule is, does not matter so much. A good rule is better than a bad one, but any rule is better than none; while, for reasons which a jurist will appreciate, none can be very good. But to gain that rule, what may be called the «impressive» elements of a polity are incomparably more important than its useful elements. How to get the obedience of men, is the hard problem; what you do with that obedience is less critical.

To gain that obedience, the primary condition is the identity — not the union, but the sameness — of what we now call «church» and «state.» . . . No division of power is then endurable without danger, probably without destruction: the priest must not teach one thing and the king another; king must be priest and prophet king,—the two must say the same because they are the same. The idea of difference between spiritual penalties and legal penalties must never be awakened,—indeed, early Greek thought or early Roman thought would never have comprehended it; there was a kind of rough public opinion, and there were rough — very rough — hands which acted on it. We now talk of «political penalties» and «ecclesiastical prohibition» and «the social censure»; but they were all one then. Nothing is very like those old communities now, but perhaps a trades-union is as near as most things: to work cheap is thought to be a «wicked» thing, and so some Broadhead puts it down.

The object of such organizations is to create what may be called a *cake* of custom. All the actions of life are to be submitted to a single rule for a single object,—that gradually created «hereditary drill» which science teaches to be essential, and which the early instinct of men saw to be essential too. That this *régime* forbids free thought is not an evil, — or rather, though an evil, it is the necessary basis for the greatest good; it is necessary for making the mold of civilization and hardening the soft fibre of early man.

BENEFITS OF FREE DISCUSSION IN MODERN TIMES

From ‹Physics and Politics›

In this manner polities of discussion broke up the old bonds of custom which were now strangling mankind, though they had once aided and helped it; but this is only one of the many gifts which those polities have conferred, are conferring, and will confer on mankind. I am not going to write a eulogium on liberty, but I wish to set down three points which have not been sufficiently noticed.

Civilized ages inherit the human nature which was victorious in barbarous ages, and that nature is in many respects not at all suited to civilized circumstances. A main and principal excellence in the early times of the human races is the impulse to action. The problems before men are then plain and simple: the man who works hardest, the man who kills the most deer, the man who catches the most fish — even later on, the man who tends the largest herds or the man who tills the largest field — is the man who succeeds; the nation which is quickest to kill its enemies or which kills most of its enemies is the nation which succeeds. All the inducements of early society tend to foster immediate action, all its penalties fall on the man who pauses; the traditional wisdom of those times was never weary of inculcating that «delays are dangerous,» and that the sluggish man — the man «who roasteth not that which he took in hunting» — will not prosper on the earth, and indeed will very soon perish out of it: and in consequence an inability to stay quiet, an irritable desire to act directly, is one of the most conspicuous failings of mankind.

Pascal said that most of the evils of life arose from «man's being unable to sit still in a room»; and though I do not go that length, it is certain that we should have been a far wiser race than we are if we had been readier to sit quiet, — we should have known much better the way in which it was best to act when we came to act. The rise of physical science, the first great body of practical truth provable to all men, exemplifies this in the plainest way: if it had not been for quiet people who sat still and studied the sections of the cone, if other quiet people had not sat still and studied the theory of infinitesimals, or other quiet people had not sat still and worked out the doctrine of chances (the most «dreamy moonshine,» as the purely practical mind would consider, of all human pursuits), if «idle star-gazers» had not watched long and carefully the motions of the heavenly bodies, — our modern astronomy would have been impossible, and without our astronomy «our ships, our colonies, our seamen,» all which makes modern life modern life, could not have existed. Ages of sedentary, quiet, thinking people were required before that noisy existence began, and without those pale preliminary students it never could have been brought into being. And nine-tenths of modern science is in this respect the same: it is the produce of men whom their contemporaries thought dreamers, who were laughed at for caring for what did not concern them, who as the proverb went «walked into a well from looking at the stars,» who were believed to be useless if any one could be such. And the conclusion is plain that if there had been more such people, if the world had not laughed at those there were, if rather it had encouraged them, there would have been a great accumulation of proved science ages before there was. It was the irritable activity, the «wish to be doing something,» that prevented it,—most men inherited a nature too eager and too restless to be quiet and find out things: and even worse, with their idle clamor they «disturbed the brooding hen»; they would not let those be quiet who wished to be so, and out of whose calm thought much good might have come forth.

If we consider how much science has done and how much it is doing for mankind, and if the over-activity of men is proved to be the cause why science came so late into the world and is so small and scanty still, that will convince most people that our over-activity is a very great evil; but this is only part and perhaps not the greatest part, of the harm that over-activity does. As I have said, it is inherited from times when life was simple, objects were plain, and quick action generally led to desirable ends: if A kills B before B kills A, then A survives, and the human race is a race of A's. But the issues of life are plain no longer: to act rightly in modern society requires a great deal of previous study, a great deal of assimilated information, a great deal of sharpened imagination; and these prerequisites of sound action require much time, and I was going to say much «lying in the sun,» a long period of «mere passiveness.»

[Argument to show that the same vice of impatience damages war, philanthropy, commerce, and even speculation.]

But it will be said, What has government by discussion to do with these things? will it prevent them, or even mitigate them? It can and does do both, in the very plainest way. If you want to stop instant and immediate action, always make it a condition that the action shall not begin till a considerable number of persons have talked over it and have agreed on it. If those persons be people of different temperaments, different ideas, and different educations, you have an almost infallible security that nothing or almost nothing will be done with excessive rapidity. Each kind of persons will have their spokesman; each spokesman will have his characteristic objection and each his characteristic counter-proposition: and so in the end nothing will probably be done, or at least only the minimum which is plainly urgent. In many cases this delay may be dangerous, in many cases quick action will be preferable; a campaign, as Macaulay well says, cannot be directed by a «debating society,» and many other kinds of action also require a single and absolute general: but for the purpose now in hand — that of preventing hasty action and insuring elaborate consideration — there is no device like a polity of discussion.

The enemies of this object — the people who want to act quickly — see this very distinctly: they are forever explaining that the present is «an age of committees,» that the committees do nothing, that all evaporates in talk. Their great enemy is parliamentary government: they call it, after Mr. Carlyle, the «national palaver»; they add up the hours that are consumed in it and the speeches which are made in it, and they sigh for a time when England might again be ruled, as it once was, by a Cromwell, — that is, when an eager absolute man might do exactly what other eager men wished, and do it immediately. All these invectives are perpetual and many-sided; they come from philosophers each of whom wants some new scheme tried, from philanthropists who want some evil abated, from revolutionists who want some old institution destroyed, from new-eraists who want their new era started forthwith: and they all are distinct admissions that a polity of discussion is the greatest hindrance to the inherited mistake of human nature, — to the desire to act promptly, which in a simple age is so excellent, but which in a later and complex time leads to so much evil.

The same accusation against our age sometimes takes a more general form: it is alleged that our energies are diminishing, that ordinary and average men have not the quick determination nowadays which they used to have when the world was younger, that not only do not committees and parliaments act with rapid decisiveness, but that no one now so acts; and I hope that in fact this is true, for according to me it proves that the hereditary barbaric impulse is decaying and dying out. So far from thinking the quality attributed to us a defect, I wish that those who complain of it were far more right than I much fear they are. Still, certainly, eager and violent action *is* somewhat diminished, though only by a small fraction of what it ought to be; and I believe that this is in great part due, in England at least, to our government by discussion, which has fostered a general intellectual tone, a diffused disposition to weigh evidence, a conviction that much may be said on every side of everything which the elder and more fanatic ages of the world wanted. This is the real reason why our energies seem so much less than those of our fathers. When we have a definite end in view, which we know we want and which we think we know how to obtain, we can act well enough: the campaigns of our soldiers are as energetic as any campaigns ever were; the speculations of our merchants have greater promptitude, greater audacity, greater vigor than any such speculations ever had before. In old times a few ideas got possession of men and communities, but this is happily now possible no longer: we see how incomplete these old ideas were; how almost by chance one seized on one nation and another on another; how often one set of men have persecuted another set for opinions on subjects of which neither, we now perceive, knew anything. It might be well if a greater number of effectual demonstrations existed among mankind: but while no such demonstrations exist, and while the evidence which completely convinces one man seems to another trifling and insufficient, let us recognize the plain position of inevitable doubt; let us not be bigots with a doubt and persecutors without a creed. We are beginning to see this, and we are railed at for so beginning: but it is a great benefit, and it is to the incessant prevalence of detective discussion that our doubts are due; and much of that discussion is due to the long existence of a government requiring constant debates, written and oral.

ORIGIN OF DEPOSIT BANKING

From ‹Lombard Street›

IN THE last century, a favorite subject of literary ingenuity was «conjectural history,» as it was then called: upon grounds of probability, a fictitious sketch was made of the possible origin of things existing. If this kind of speculation were now applied to banking, the natural and first idea would be that large systems of deposit banking grew up in the early world just as they grow up now in any large English colony. As soon as any such community becomes rich enough to have much money, and compact enough to be able to lodge its money in single banks, it at once begins so to do. English colonists do not like the risk of keeping their money, and they wish to make an interest on it; they carry from home the idea and the habit of banking, and they take to it as soon as they can in their new world. Conjectural history would be inclined to say that all banking began thus; but such history is rarely of any value,—the basis of it is false. It assumes that what works most easily when established is that which it would be the most easy to establish, and that what seems simplest when familiar would be most easily appreciated by the mind though unfamiliar; but exactly the contrary is true,—many things which seem simple, and which work well when firmly established, are very hard to establish among new people and not very easy to explain to them. Deposit banking is of this sort. Its essence is, that a very large number of persons agree to trust a very few persons, or some one person: banking would not be a profitable trade if bankers were not a small number, and depositors in comparison an immense number. But to get a great number of persons to do exactly the same thing is always very difficult, and nothing but a very palpable necessity will make them on a sudden begin to do it; and there is no such palpable necessity in banking.

If you take a country town in France, even now, you will not find any such system of banking as ours: check-books are unknown, and money kept on running account by bankers is rare; people store their money in a *caisse* at their houses. Steady savings, which are waiting for investment and which are sure not to be soon wanted, may be lodged with bankers; but the common floating cash of the community is kept by the community themselves at home, — they prefer to keep it so, and it would not answer a banker's purpose to make expensive arrangements for keeping it otherwise. If a "branch," such as the National Provincial Bank opens in an English country town, were opened in a corresponding French one, it would not pay its expenses: you could not get any sufficient number of Frenchmen to agree to put their money there.

And so it is in all countries not of British descent, though in various degrees. Deposit banking is a very difficult thing to begin, because people do not like to let their money out of their sight; especially, do not like to let it out of sight without security; still more, cannot all at once agree on any single person to whom they are content to trust it unseen and unsecured. Hypothetical history, which explains the past by what is simplest and commonest in the present, is in banking, as in most things, quite untrue.

The real history is very different. New wants are mostly supplied by adaptation, not by creation or foundation; something having been created to satisfy an extreme want, it is used to satisfy less pressing wants or to supply additional conveniences. On this account, political government, the oldest institution in the world, has been the hardest worked: at the beginning of history, we find it doing everything which society wants done and forbidding everything which society does *not* wish done. In trade, at present, the first commerce in a new place is a general shop, which, beginning with articles of real necessity, comes shortly to supply the oddest accumulation of petty comforts. And the history of banking has been the same: the first banks were not founded for our system of deposit banking, or for anything like it; they were founded for much more pressing reasons, and having been founded, they or copies from them were applied to our modern uses.

[Gives a sketch of banks started as finance companies to make or float government loans, and to give good coin; and sketches their function of remitting money.]

These are all uses other than those of deposit banking, which banks supplied that afterwards became in our English sense deposit banks: by supplying these uses, they gained the credit that afterwards enabled them to gain a living as deposit banks; being trusted for one purpose, they came to be trusted for a purpose quite different,—ultimately far more important, though at first less keenly pressing. But these wants only affect a few persons, and therefore bring the bank under the notice of a few only. The real introductory function which deposit banks at first perform is much more popular; and it is only when they can perform this most popular kind of business that deposit banking ever spreads quickly and extensively.

This function is the supply of the paper circulation to the country; and it will be observed that I am not about to overstep my limits and discuss this as a question of currency. In what form the best paper currency can be supplied to a country is a question of economical theory with which I do not meddle here: I am only narrating unquestionable history, not dealing with an argument where every step is disputed; and part of this certain history is, that the best way to diffuse banking in a community is to allow the banker to issue bank notes of small amount that can supersede the metal currency. This amounts to a subsidy to each banker to enable him to keep open a bank till depositors choose to come to it. . . .

The reason why the use of bank paper commonly precedes the habit of making deposits in banks is very plain: it is a far easier habit to establish. In the issue of notes the banker, the person to be most benefited, can do something,—he can pay away his own «promises» in loans, in wages, or in payment of debts,—but in the getting of deposits he is passive; his issues depend on himself, his deposits on the favor of others. And to the public the change is far easier too: to collect a great mass of deposits with the same banker, a great number of persons must agree to do something; but to establish a note circulation, a large number of persons need only *do nothing*,—they receive the banker's notes in the common course of their business, and they have only *not* to take those notes to the banker for payment. If the public refrain from taking trouble, a paper circulation is immediately in existence. A paper circulation is begun by the banker, and requires no effort on the part of the public,—on the contrary, it needs an effort of the public to be rid of notes once issued; but deposit banking cannot be begun by the banker, and requires a spontaneous and consistent effort in the community: and therefore paper issue is the natural prelude to deposit banking.

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